

Tuesday March 24 1998

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The Guardian

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INTERNATIONAL
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Katharine Viner meets a literary legend

Ioni Morrison: voice of America

G2 with European weather

The trouble with returning to work

The maternity minefield

G2 pages 8-9

Education

The real story of Blair's commitment to education

G2 pages 12-13

Yeltsin ignites Russia crisis

Sackings risk power struggle

James Meek in Moscow

AN OBSCURE former shipping engineer, Sergei Kiriyenko, is a heartbeat away from control of a former superpower's nuclear arsenal today after President Boris Yeltsin cast Russia into political turmoil by sacking his long-serving prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and all 33 members of his government.

Mr Yeltsin, a recipient of heart bypass surgery who returned to the Kremlin yesterday after the latest in a long series of illnesses, plucked Mr Kiriyenko, aged 36, from the energy minister's desk to become acting prime minister.

Under the Russian constitution, the prime minister takes over as acting head of state for three months if the president is incapacitated or dies. But because Mr Kiriyenko's new status has not been confirmed, any failure of Mr Yeltsin's fragile health could lead to a struggle without rules for the nuclear button and the governance of Russia.

"The president has begun a new constitutional crisis," said one political analyst, Lilia Shevtsova. "Until the new government is approved by parliament we are in a dangerous period."

Mr Chernomyrdin, the stolid, pragmatic, articulate former gas industry chief who over five years as prime minister came to symbolise Russia's hesitant economic reforms, took the unexpected blow on the chair yesterday. "The hardest, the dirtiest, the most thankless work has, of course, already been done by us," he said. "Now it's necessary to move forward."

The compensation Mr Yeltsin offered him — a job campaigning for Yeltsin allies in future elections — was meagre exchange for the eclipse of Mr Chernomyrdin's own presidential ambitions.

Mr Yeltsin awarded him the Order of Services to the

Fatherland, second class. Asked why he had not been given first class, the presidential press spokesman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, said: "That's reserved for the president."

Appearing on television yesterday, Mr Yeltsin spoke warmly of the prime minister's work but said it was time for fresh faces in the cabinet. "The dismissal of the government does not mean a change of course," he said. "It is an effort to make economic reforms more energetic and effective, to give them a political push, a new impulse."

He added: "Unfortunately, people don't feel change is for the better. I believe that recently the government has been lacking dynamism and initiative, new outlooks, fresh approaches and ideas. And without this, a powerful breakthrough in the economy is impossible."

Most members of the government, including the young liberal, Boris Nemtsov, will keep their portfolios for the time being while Mr Kiriyenko draws up a cabinet. But two prominent figures lost their jobs: Anatoly Chubais, the deputy prime minister and unpopular architect of Russian privatisation; and his ideological opposite, Anatoly Kudakov, the head of the police force and interior ministry, a key figure in maintaining government control in the face of any unrest.

After shying at the news, financial markets in Russia and around the world settled as Mr Yeltsin, Mr Yastrzhembsky and Mr Kiriyenko in turn promised no change in the government's course of economic reform.

"There will be no new government programme. There will be a continuity of policy," Mr Kiriyenko said, saying he had heard of his appointment only that morning.

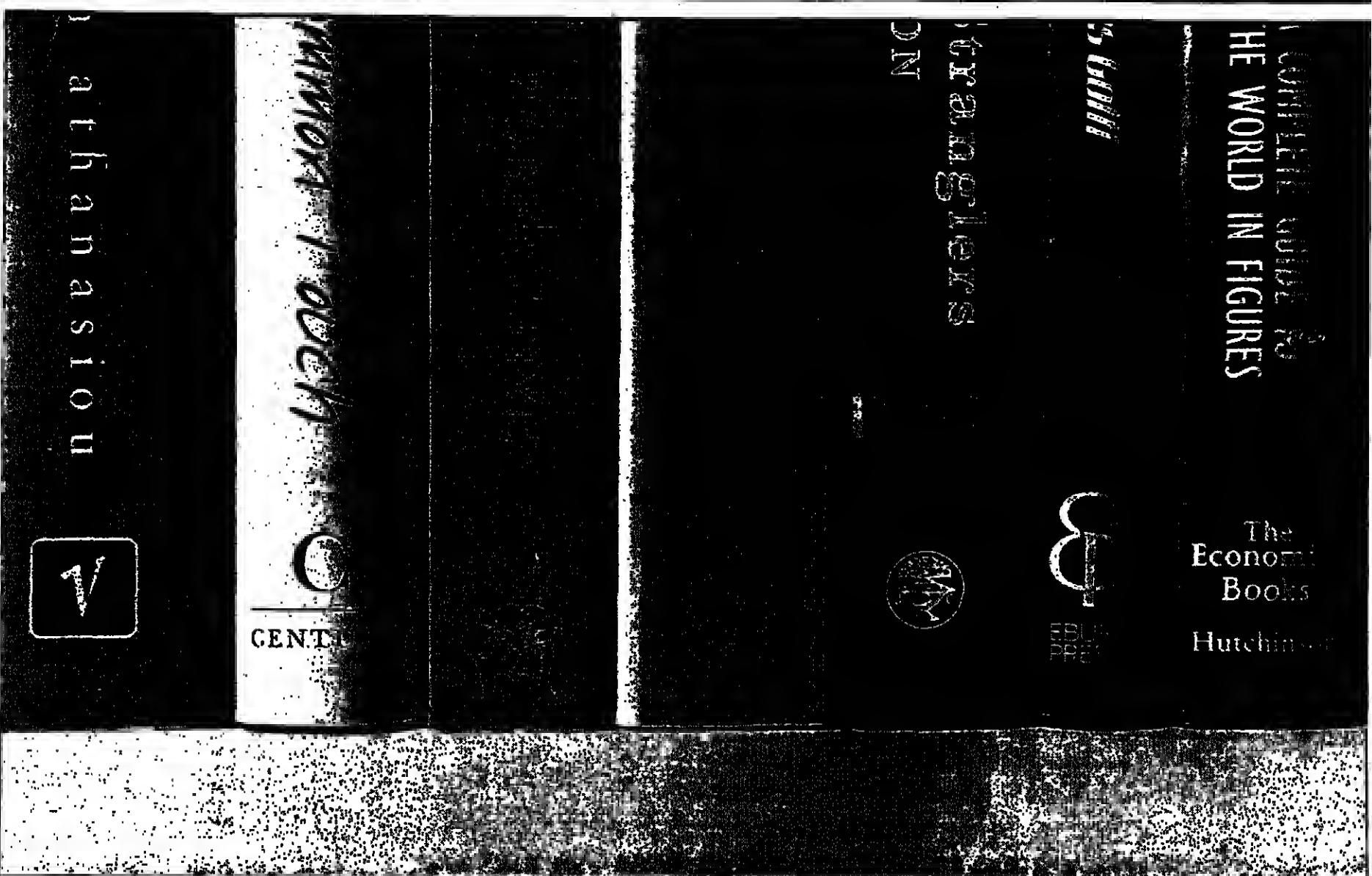
Mr Kiriyenko is an economic liberal and a protégé of Mr Nemtsov. But he may be a transitional figure. The old standard-bearer of Russian liberals, Grigory Yavlinsky, flew to Moscow last night saying that he had been "invited" and that he might head a new government.

The dismissal of Mr Chernomyrdin, whom Mr Yavlinsky regarded as a corrupt energy baron, was one of Mr Yavlinsky's previous conditions for entering the government.

The Kremlin was talking up Mr Kiriyenko's chances last night, but his youth and inexperience may count against him. Pragmatic regional leaders such as Yegor Stroyev, Konstantin Titov and Dmitri Ayatskov are likely alternatives.

The trouble with Boris, page 5; Leader comment, page 5; Notebook, page 12

Huge new group dominates English-language publishing



Random House British and US imprints to be merged with those of the German media group Bertelsmann, creating the biggest publishing group in the English-speaking world

German giant swallows Random House

Random facts

- On 1 October 1997, Random House Inc. is the world's largest publisher of books in English. Authors include William Faulkner, Herman Melville, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and many others.
- Random House is the largest publisher of books in the US, with a turnover of about \$1 billion (£600 million). The merger should raise publishing turnover in the US alone to about \$1 billion. Bertelsmann executives said.
- The German and US markets will each furnish 35 per cent of Bertelsmann's global sales volume, Mr Wössner said.
- Mr Wössner, aged 59, a Berliner whose empire is based in Gütersloh in north-western Germany, is not liked by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and is seen as a powerful media ally of Mr Kohl's Social Democratic turn to page 2, column 2

house Alfred A. Knopf, publisher of John Le Carré, John Updike and Richard Brautigan. Bertelsmann has acquired the rights to publish the works of the Random House family, a period of intense acquisition followed.

• In the US, the publisher in 1997 of the British publishing group, including Penguin, Doubleday, and many others, is to be merged with Bantam Doubleday Dell (BDD), already owned by Bertelsmann, in a new company called Random House Inc. It will embrace the US, British, Canadian, Australian, South African and

Jan Traynor in Bonn and Giles Foden

THE German media company Bertelsmann, Europe's biggest media and publishing conglomerate, yesterday moved to dominate the English-speaking world of books by announcing it was taking over Random House.

The United States group was until recently headed by Harold Evans, the New York-based former Times and Sunday Times editor.

Random House is to be merged with Bantam Doubleday Dell (BDD), already owned by Bertelsmann, in a new company called Random House Inc. It will embrace the US, British, Canadian, Australian, South African and

New Zealand subsidiaries and markets as the biggest publishing group in the English-speaking world. "Our engagement today affirms that Bertelsmann firmly believes in the promising future of the book," Mark Wössner, the head of Bertelsmann, said in announcing the takeover in Munich. "Expanding our English-language book publishing activities has been an increasing strategic priority."

The parties refused to divulge financial details of the acquisition, and referred it to the US regulatory authorities for approval. Bertelsmann said it expected the takeover to be sealed by the summer.

Through BDD and its UK subsidiary Randomworld, Bertelsmann already publishes bestselling authors

including John Grisham and Danielle Steele. Recent British commercial triumphs have been Nicholas Evans's *The Horse Whisperer* and Bill Bryson's *Notes from a Small Island*. Random House has a turnover of about \$1 billion (£600 million). The merger should raise publishing turnover in the US alone to about \$1 billion. Bertelsmann executives said.

The German and US markets will each furnish 35 per cent of Bertelsmann's global sales volume, Mr Wössner said. Mr Wössner, aged 59, a Berliner whose empire is based in Gütersloh in north-western Germany, is not liked by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and is seen as a powerful media ally of Mr Kohl's Social Democratic turn to page 2, column 2

Blair 'helped Murdoch media bid'

Italian paper says PM intervened with his counterpart in Rome

Michael White and John Hooper in Rome

TONY Blair's relationship with Rupert Murdoch was again under scrutiny last night after claims in the Italian media that the Prime Minister had intervened with Romano Prodi, his centre-left counterpart in Rome, to help Mr Murdoch's bid for the Berlusconi media empire.

Downing Street confirmed that Mr Blair did speak with Mr Prodi, at the latter's instigation, last Wednesday, but would not confirm or deny claims in the Turin-based centre-right *La Stampa* newspaper that they had discussed Mr Murdoch's twice-thwarted bid for Mediaset, the holding

company controlled by the media magnate-cum-politician Silvio Berlusconi. "I have no reason to believe the call was to do with Mr Murdoch," a Downing Street spokesman told reporters amid speculation on both sides of the Atlantic about the Australian tycoon's efforts to buy a bigger stake in non-English language media markets in Europe.

Without citing sources, *La Stampa's* stock market specialist, Ugo Bertone, described Mr Blair as "Murdoch's sponsor" in the deal. Mr Bertone said he had received confirmation from London.

Among obvious alternative reasons for Mr Prodi's call, some Italian observers suggested last night, were rou-

tine issues arising from the British EU presidency or details of mergers between British and Italian defence and aerospace interests — part of the Europe-wide consolidation in which GEC and BAE are key players.

Three years ago Mr Murdoch failed to buy a controlling interest in Mediaset which would have given him up to 50 per cent of Italian TV advertising revenue and relieved Mr Berlusconi of the "conflict of interest" which dogged his brief premiership.

A renewed Murdoch courtship ended on Friday when Mr Berlusconi said that family pressures — "heart reasons" — had prevailed, though the offered price for Mediaset was also reported to be a factor.

The two tycoons met again in London on Saturday, raising speculation that more was afoot. But their talks may have concerned unrelated

matters, such as digital TV distribution. Mr Blair has laid great store in keeping Mr Murdoch on side with New Labour, although he faces pressure from some MPs and peers in all parties to curb his power, through tighter controls on predatory pricing and media cross-ownership.

The Italian prime minister's office was yesterday offering no comment on the report.

The fate of Mr Berlusconi's media holdings is an intensely political issue in Italy. Though he has sold off much of his stake in the Mediaset TV and advertising group, the leader of the rightwing opposition still has a 50.6 per cent interest. Mediaset runs all three of the country's biggest commercial channels.

A spokeswoman for News International said the company would not be making any comment on the reports.



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QUALITY IS A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE.

Sketch

Mystic Frank's words of wisdom



Simon Hoggart

ANY visitor to Japan will tell you, a man's prestige can be judged by how little he needs to say. In a group, say, of business executives, there will be one who sits in almost total silence, indicating assent by an almost imperceptible nod, disagreement by the merest narrowing of the eyes, and a world of meaning through the deployment of cigarette smoke. In a purposeful jet or as a reflective plume which rises as if from a cottage chimney on a still summer's evening.

By that token, Frank Field, the Minister for Social Security, must be a very important man indeed. While his colleagues chatter and jabber, he sits in an imperturbable calm. He seems almost yogic in his ability to meditate quietly while all around him is noise and chaos. One is slightly surprised to see that he is not cross-legged on the bench.

It is commonly said that his job is to "think the unthinkable", but I do not believe that someone like himself, in touch with the innermost life of the spirit, engages in anything so worldly as mere thought. Instead he has insights which manifest themselves in his mind, fully formed like phantoms swirling from the ether. One of these days we will look at Mr Field, and see, in the middle of his forehead, a third eye.

Harriet Harman and another minister, John Denham, talked about welfare to work and participation rates in stakeholder pensions.

The Minister for Women, Joan Ruddock, offered protection against exploitation of "the girl-child", adding that there would be "a gender perspective" on "girl-child" provision, information and counselling services. She promised "key input" from "the Women's Unit", into an "integrated policy document".

"Girl-child" is one of those phrases, like "sheep-meat regime", each element of

which is clear, but whose combined effect is faintly sinister. I don't quite know why. Mr Field sat quite still and said nothing. Mr Skinner used a question on disability benefits to attack receptionists in Downing Street for pop stars. "It would be a good thing for the Prime Minister to stop inviting these tinpot 'music-makers' into No 10, and have some disability rights campaigners instead!"

Tories cheered wildly at this cunning twist. Mr Skinner had managed to link the unlikable.

(And to be fair to Mr Blair, he just likes helping legless people. There were plenty of those around after the last reception.)

Mr Soames arrived late. He is clearly not still on his diet, having given up trying to shrink the unshrinkable. Mr Field gazed calmly ahead. Then suddenly, to a gasp of "Aaah!" from the Tories, 40 minutes after the session began, he uncoiled himself and rose to speak. He was questioning a Lib-Dem question about mortgage relief for poor people. He said the scheme would cost three-quarters of a million pounds.

"It is," he said, "an interesting question whether the House would prefer to spend it in the way the honourable gentleman wishes, or in some other way."

Like all great Eastern philosophers, Mr Field hopes to find enlightenment through similarly ruminative, unanswerable questions. Others are: "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" "Does the lark sing because she is happy, or is she happy because she is singing?" "What does a man have to do to get a drink around here?"

Simon Burns, a Tory front-bencher, accused the Government of a cock-up over something or other. No mystic would be wounded by such vulgar onslaughts. Instead Mr Field pointed out that, as a supporter of the previous government, Mr Burns had not let a day go by without "waving a piece of paper, which he invariably claimed was the most important piece of paper that the Government had produced, since the following day".

"Since the following day!" The House gasped at the seer's mystic talents, which now include time travel. He resumed his seat and became silent and sat once more, unto the very end.

Review

Muesli music to start the day

David Ward

Pete Trelawny On Air Radio 3

THREE hours of music to munch muesli by. Nothing too tough, nothing too demanding, nothing (except one concerto) over 10 minutes.

Twenty-six pieces introduced by Pete Trelawny, the Cornishman who seemed permanently exiled in MultiYork furniture shops during his run at Classic FM. Yesterday he was ensnared pianissimo on to Radio 3's early morning show with none of the fanfares that accompanied Paul Gambaccini's move in the same direction.

Trelawny lacks Gambaccini's audible smirk and gives it to us straight, whether it's a Schubert violin miniature or a lorry stuck on the M1 at the junction with the A14. It is a nice voice to have around, enthusiastic if a bit ingratulating, but at least it knows when to shut up.

And it's not too bright and breezy at crack of dawn. At 6am it slunk into the bedroom with the first light peeping through the Laura Ashley curtains; at 7am it was perking up over the first cup of coffee in the kitchen; by 8am it was brisk and confident in the dining room, but hardly disturbing the cat (who has not been well of late).

So Trelawny will do, even if his opening managed to be simultaneously obvious and enigmatic. It's the beginning

of the day for me but the end of a day for the men on a red train hurtling north," he said. And then came Nigel Hawthorne, chanting Auden's Night Mail words to Britten's music with such insistence that the train roared through the dovetail tunnel and up the pillow gradient.

To doze was impossible, to rise and shave inevitable. But then Trelawny introduced Vaughan Williams's Tallis Fantasia, a piece so mystically languid that the razor barely skimmed the foam on the whiskers.

And then with the briefest of warnings ("the glorious sound of two male voices — counter-tenors; they don't get much better than this") the mood shifted again, lurching into the Sound The Trumpet duet from Purcell's Come Ye Sons Of Art Away. Stainless steel flashed across skin.

Three English pieces first thing on a Monday morning. And there was more to come: a bit of Anon's lute music, a Tallis choral piece, more Purcell, some Handel (an honorary Englishman), and Holst's Jupiter to finish. Left for work singing I Vow To Thee My Country and wondering if Nicholas Karyon, controller of Radio 3, was preparing us for a right-wing coup.

One living foreigner had caused the heart to leap during sandwich-making time at 7.40am. At last a challenge, a tough nut for the muesli. But Michael Torke's andyone Blue Pages was as sweetly unsatisfying as Alpen.

Orchestra's Japan tour hit

David Ward

A TOUR of Japan planned by a leading orchestra yesterday became the first British arts casualty of the after-effects of the financial crisis in the Far East.

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra was to have given eight concerts in Tokyo, Osaka, Sapporo and other cities during an 11-day tour in June. But after almost

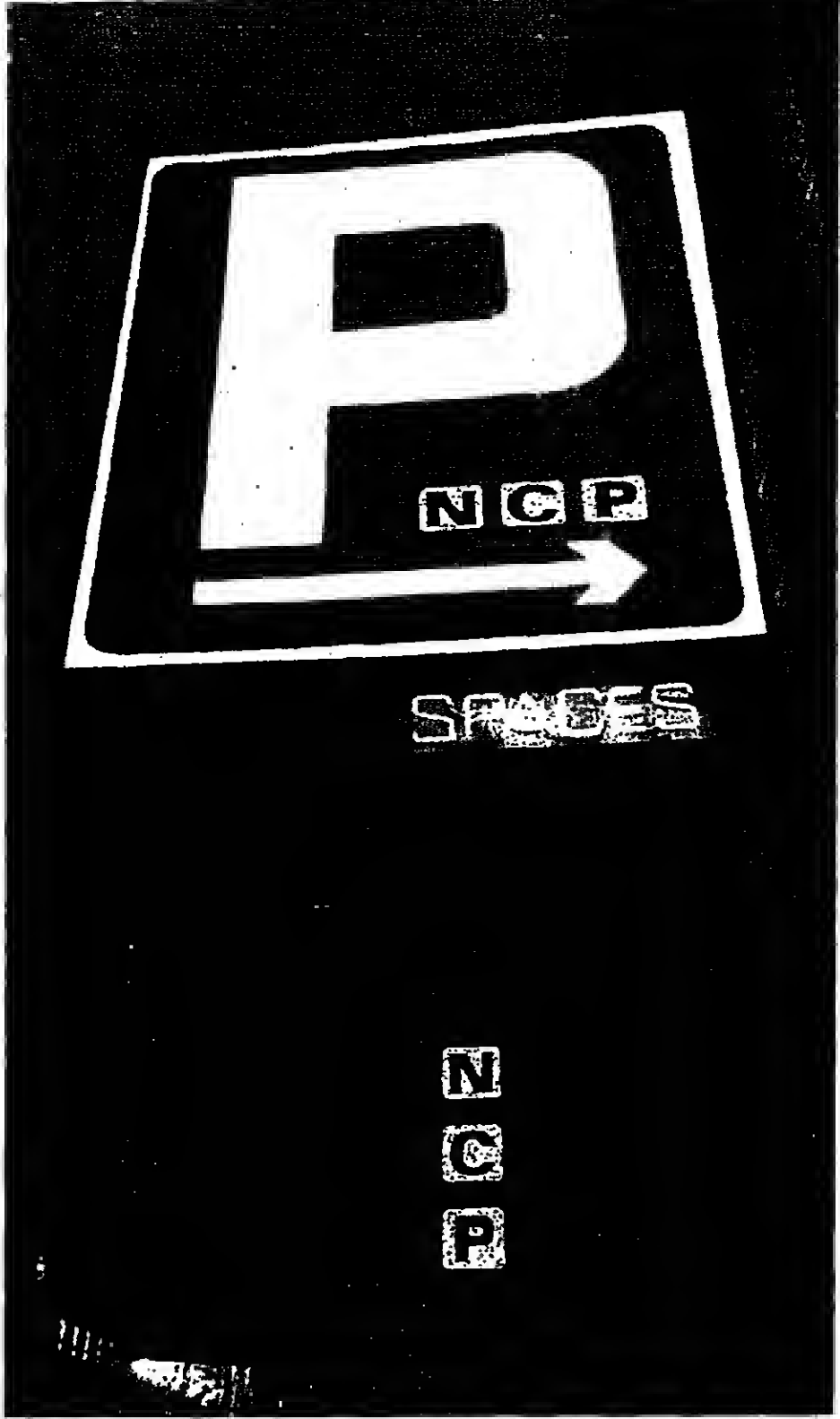
three years of planning, Japanese promoters pulled out, saying they were unable to raise sponsorship from companies trying to survive in a tough new economic climate.

The 90 Liverpool musicians would have played classical programmes under their conductor laureate, Libor Pesek, and Carl Davis would have directed them in popular programmes, which included arrangements of songs by the Beatles.



Sir Don Gosling... as naval man with luxurious yacht

The two founders made £20m when they sold a quarter of the group. With dividends over the years, they are likely to be worth at least half a billion pounds each



NCP's first site cost £200. Now the group has fetched £201 million PHOTOGRAPH BY GARRY WEBSTER

NCP men: from bomb-site to £600m

David Gow and Tony May

TWO ex-servicemen who built a car parks and breakdown service empire on the back of a £200 purchase of a central London bomb-site 50 years ago yesterday netted almost £200 million each when it was sold to a US group.

Sir Don Gosling and Ron Hobson, the founders of National Car Parks, who with family trusts own 72.5 per cent of the company, agreed to an £201 million purchase by the Centant Corporation and at the same time resigned.

It is the largest sell-off of a private stake in a British company and the third time in just over a decade that the secretive duo have cashed in on their success in building up a business that embraces Green Flag, the breakdown service firm

that sponsors the England soccer team.

They each made £20 million in 1986 when they sold a quarter of the group, confusingly known as National Parking Corporation, to financial institutions and have since picked up about £20 million in special dividends. Together with ordinary dividends over the years, they are likely to be worth at least half a billion pounds each.

Sir Don, a naval man now aged 69 and then a bored trainee surveyor, bumped into Mr Hobson, an army man now aged 75, when both were looking for a new start in post-war life. Mr Hobson had hit on the notion that bomb-sites could be used as car parks — a sensible when there were few cars on the road and no parking restrictions.

That first site, on Red Lion Square, Holborn, cen-

tral London, was followed over the next 40 years by a further 699 at the peak in the 1980s, though NCP now owns or manages 500 car parks.

Sir Don, a fanatical yachtsman who tried in 1994 to finance a new royal yacht, was knighted in Harold Wilson's infamous 1976 resignation honours list. But he became an arch-Thatcherite in the 1980s and reportedly donated £200,000 to the Thatcher Charitable Trust in 1991.

Born in Streatham, south London, he is essentially a flamboyant property man who, having served on HMS Leander during the war, now owns one of the world's most luxurious motor yachts — the 245ft Leander.

Co-founder Mr Hobson is, by contrast, a relative recluse who turned down the knighthood offered on Mr Wilson's "lavender list"

and lives quietly with his wife Patricia in a multi-million-pound thatched mansion in north London. He is paying some £8 million to buy back part of NCP's Mayfair headquarters, it emerged yesterday. But none of their advisers knew their plans for the future.

NCP was damaged by allegations of industrial espionage in 1990 during its battle to take over rival operator Europarks.

It was alleged that a security firm run by ex-SAS soldiers rifled rival directors' dustbins, drew up reports on their private lives and removed their files and briefcases. The then chief executive, Gordon Layton, was, however, acquitted at the Old Bailey on charges of conspiracy to defraud — and NCP bought Europarks for just £5 million.

New motoring era, page 12

Sinn Fein returns to talks turmoil

Rory Carroll

NORTHERN Ireland politicians returned to peace talks yesterday and stopped bickering long enough to agree on one thing: government hopes of a deal within three weeks were too optimistic.

Major differences over cross-border bodies, policing and arms decommissioning surfaced soon after the parties sat down at Stormont for what is supposed to be the climax of the peace process.

Unionists and Sinn Fein accused each other of posturing but government ministers insisted a settlement could be reached before Easter in time for a referendum in May.

The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) picketed Castle Buildings at Stormont as Sinn Fein arrived for the first time in a month following its suspension because of two killings attributed to the IRA.

Unionist leader David Trimble said Sinn Fein was not committed to the process but that an agreement without them could be made between his party and the Social and Democratic Labour Party (SDLP), a claim rubbished by rival unionists who said John Hume would not break with Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president.

Mr Trimble requested a formal review session of the talks to discuss progress on decommissioning paramilitary weapons — a hangear issue which ministers thought had been set aside.

Mr Trimble said his party was concerned at government "hype" which gave a false impression about progress. He said questions had to be asked following reports that IRA targeting of policemen had reached pre-ceasefire levels and that the IRA, not splinter groups, were behind recent attacks and bombings.

The talks may be thrown into disarray later this week if Jeffrey Donaldson, a Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) negotiator, supplies a dossier he says contains fresh evidence of IRA violence. This would breach the Mitchell Principles and oblige the Government to elect Sinn Fein again.

Mr Adams said any deal would fail if it excluded his party. "A partial agreement, a factional agreement, won't work."

He said David Trimble had been rewarded for intransigence. "Mr Trimble is a learner driver who can't be left in the driving seat. Mr Blair has to drive change forward on every issue that has been mapped out for change."

Negotiation was virtually impossible if the UUP continued to avoid talking directly to Sinn Fein, said Mr Adams. Seamus Mallon, the deputy SDLP leader, said there had to be an agreement between unionism and nationalism — not individual parties.

Accusing Unionists of becoming "wobbly-kneed" as the day of reckoning approached, Mr Mallon predicted that a settlement would emerge, but only after much difficulty, redraft and apprehension.

Ministers refused to discuss what happens if the parties fail and stood by Tony Blair's claim that a deal was "agonisingly close". Mo Mowlam said she remained "stubbornly optimistic".

Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, opened discussions by detailing the plans for a Welsh

Unionists express concern at 'hype' which gives a false impression about progress

Assembly, a model which the Government hopes may help produce agreement on a Northern Ireland assembly.

Yesterday's discussions dealt with the internal needs of Northern Ireland. Today's talks deal with the far more contentious Strand Two, the relationship between Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The integrity of a referendum, which ministers want set up before the summer's marching season, was undermined yesterday by a report which detailed extensive electoral fraud.

The Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee said there was insufficient time to introduce safeguards against multiple registration at the same address, personation and postal vote abuse.

Two thirds of the postal votes in the Mid Ulster seat narrowly won last year by Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness were said to be questionable. William McCrea, who lost the seat for the DUP, said he was taking legal advice and may mount a legal challenge.

US book world in shock

Joanna Coles in New York finds publishers mourning the end of an era

WHEN Henry Luce, the former owner of Time magazine, tried to buy Random House from its founder, Bennett Cerf, in 1965 the United States Justice department used the antitrust laws to rule against the sale, claiming it would create a media monopoly.

Yesterday it was unclear whether the same department would flex its muscles or allow the surprise sale of Random House to go ahead. Either way, the New York publishing world was in shock.

"I feel like a giant is gobbling up all the little people," said one novelist with Random House, who refused to be named. "I know Random is a conglomerate, but at least it was a privately owned one."

This is bad for writers on all levels. You can't now send a manuscript to both Doubleday and Knopf, and it's even bad for big authors like Tom

Clancy. It means there are fewer places to go.

"It's the end of an era in New York cultural terms," said Thomas Maier, author of Newhouse, the award-winning investigative biography of S.I. Newhouse, until yesterday Random House's proprietor.

Asked why he thought Mr Newhouse wanted to sell, Mr Maier said: "I think SI and his brother Donald are preparing to pack it in; they're hitting their seventies. They had a fork in the road: either become a first-rate media company or pare down, sell for tax reasons and hand over to the next generation."

Unlike most of the Newhouse empire which SI inherited from his father Sam, it was his own decision to buy Random in 1980 for the then bargain price of \$60 million (\$36 million).

"It gave him prestige," said one Newhouse insider. "The rest of it is regional newspapers and magazines (including the New Yorker, Vanity Fair, Condé Nast Traveller and Vogue)."

Mr Newhouse expanded Random House in the 1980s, rapidly purchasing other imprints in the US and Britain. Though the company also

owns Vintage and Pantheon, the two best known imprints are Knopf and Random House itself, which publish a cocktail of commercial fiction, including Michael Crichton and Norman Mailer, and more serious writers, such as John Updike and John Casey.

Although recent successes include John Berendt's Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil and Joe Klein's anonymous Primary Colors, the company has been hit by several expensive flops.

Marion Brande was paid \$5 million for his autobiography, while Dick Morris, President Bill Clinton's former adviser, received more than \$1 million for his diary. Neither book sold many copies.

Among anxious staff at Doubleday and Random House the talk yesterday was of redundancies. "Massive redundancies, inevitably," said one depressed executive.

Alberto Vitale, Random House's US chief executive, will relinquish control of the company to Doubleday's Peter Olson, but will become chairman of a supervisory board. He said: "Certainly in the UK the companies will operate independently for now. But time will tell."

German giant takes over Random House

continued from page 1

challenger, Gerhard Schröder. Bertelsmann has a turnover of some \$2 billion and is the world's third-biggest media, entertainment and publishing conglomerate, after Time Warner and the Disney group.

Through a strategic alliance with America Online, Bertelsmann is engaged in the cyberspace and Internet server industries, and is poised to play a key role

in the looming digital and pay-television markets.

The European Commission is currently examining Bertelsmann's plans with the German television mogul Leo Kirch to market television decoders in preparation for the expected pay-TV bonanza.

Random House Inc is to be headed by Peter Olson, the present chairman of the Bertelsmann Book Group North America. Mr Olson promised "an unstinting

commitment to publishing excellence and autonomy". Bertelsmann said in its takeover statement: "The various publishing divisions and imprints will retain full editorial independence and publishing autonomy."

S.I. Newhouse, the owner of Random House, said he was selling it to concentrate on the "core business" of newspapers, magazines, business journals and cable.

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— prosecutor Andrew Campbell-Tiech

Remains found buried at artist's family estate

Examples of the work of sculptor Anthony-Noel Kelly

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

that employees were asked to take body parts, wrapped in sealed yellow biohazard bags, next door to the premises of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund to dispose of them in its incinerator — even though

"The Royal College of Surgeons would never have permitted him to do this. Niel Lindsay did."

Mr Kelly paid Niel Lindsay around £400 in return for his services.

The court heard the police in-

But officers found one of his diaries which revealed the involvement of Mr Lindsay and the concealment of more remains in the friend's flat in Brixton, south London.

The court also heard that college employees had disposed of a set of femurs — thighbones with some flesh

Mr Kelly and Mr Lindsay both deny stealing human anatomical specimens from the college between June 1981 and November 1994. Mr Kelly has also pleaded not guilty to handling stolen goods. The case continues.

Poor students put off by tuition fees

The original plan for ISAs proved to be even more contentious, with criticism that the proposed \$50,000 limit for lifetime savings would be unfair to those who had built up a nest-egg in PEPs and Tesses.


and college places by under 21-year-olds have increased to 270,000, from 268,000 last year, despite last year's rush to beat fees. The rise in the number of 18-year-olds applying is even higher, at nearly 20,000 in England.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, or similar publicity from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, Ucas.

tioned about the introduction of fees, 57 per cent said they were worried and half said they would have to take a job while studying. Five per cent said they could no longer afford to go

might reflect a recovery in the labour market and the fact that a much higher proportion of school leavers now went to university so there was a smaller pool of unsatisfied demand.

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4 BRITAIN

Burden of proof to be lowered and right to silence axed in shake-up of discipline procedures
Corrupt police face quick dismissal

Sarah Hall

CORRUPT police officers could be ousted within six weeks under a radical shake-up of complaints and discipline procedures unveiled yesterday.

The burden of proof at disciplinary hearings will be lowered from the criminal to the civil standard — ensuring it is easier for crooked officers to be found guilty.

The double jeopardy rule — whereby officers acquitted at a criminal trial automatically escaped a disciplinary hearing — will be abolished, and will be replaced by "going sick". Officers claiming to be too ill to attend hearings will be dealt with in their absence. "In practice, it will mean they

become miraculously present," said the Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

The reforms, which come into force from next April, follow a five-year consultation and come less than two months after the latest instance of alleged police corruption centring on 12 Metropolitan police officers suspended in January following a series of raids.

They also come in the wake of claims by Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan police commissioner, that there could be 250 dishonest officers in his force. And they follow the assertion by West Midlands chief constable, Ted Crew, that officers who "would be employed by Sainsbury's" escape dismissal.

Among the measures will be new powers to allow chief constables to sack the worst officers in six weeks, instead



'I don't believe it's right for these officers to go on drawing on pensions even while they're in prison'

Jack Straw (left)

of having to go through disciplinary hearings that can last a year.

The shake-up, which goes some way in following the "compelling case for change"

outlined in the Commons home affairs committee's report, also brings an end to an officer's right to silence in disciplinary hearings, but allows them to retain lawyers

Rules for reform

- A reduction in the standard of proof in disciplinary hearings from the criminal trial standard of "beyond reasonable doubt" to the "balance of probabilities" used in civil cases
- A "fast track" dismissal procedure to enable the worst officers to be sacked within six weeks, instead of after internal hearings which can drag on for a year
- An end to the "double jeopardy" which means officers cleared of charges in a criminal court cannot

- then face a disciplinary hearing on the same matter
- An end to officers' right to silence during disciplinary hearings
- Rules to stop officers charged with disciplinary offences evading action by retreating sick
- The Home Secretary to assess automatically the right of an officer convicted of a criminal offence to a full pension. At present, police authorities apply in individual instances for pensions to be forfeited

state share of their pension — constituting three-quarters of it — withheld.

"I don't believe it's right for these officers to go on drawing on pensions at the public expense even while they're in prison," said Mr Straw. "It is abhorrent that public money should be paid out to those very few officers who abuse their position of trust."

The complaints procedure also faces reform, with the Home Office considering whether an independent complaints investigation body could be established.

The Police Complaints Authority, or any independent review body, could also undertake investigations irrespective of whether there had been a complaint, when in the public interest. The prospect of independent investigative groups was also pointed to. The measures were warmly

welcomed by the Association of Chief Police Officers, whose members have lobbied for greater powers to tackle police malpractice to ensure "greater effectiveness, transparency and openness". The independent PCA also backed the moves, as did the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales, although it voiced reservations about the decision to lower the standard of proof in disciplinary cases.

But the Police Federation, representing 126,000 officers up to the rank of chief inspector, said this move would "damage the confidence and morale of the service". "Officers investigating hard core criminals will think twice if their inquiries can result in allegations of impropriety being levelled against them," said Fred Broughton, its chairman.

BBC unleashes frills and spills for lottery show

Kamal Ahmed on a concept of TV fun causing concern in the Commons

THE catapult car worked perfectly. As did the human pin ball machine and the giant, silver safe which holds the fortunes of the show's contestants. But still it was not the happiest of days for the BBC.

Tony Wolfe explained how the mocked up racing car would fling the competitors with more force than a moon-bound rocket.

And how the lift machines and the vats of gunk would bring a smile to audiences and an even bigger grin to executives who watch the BBC's struggling Saturday night ratings.

But the scratchcards question kept returning. "Yes, it is controversial," Mr Wolfe, the executive producer of the National Lottery Big Ticket Show, admitted. "But at no point in the show do I promote the scratchcard. I am absolutely governed by the BBC guidelines, I can assure you that they are not breached."

Parliament again signalled its displeasure at the show which has been accused of being a big advert for Camelot. Mr Wolfe, the chairman of culture select committee, has now secured a special House of

Commons debate on the issue tomorrow. The Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, will again be asked to take action.

Mr Kaufman has accused the BBC of promoting the sale of lottery scratchcards which the public has to buy to have a chance of appearing on the programme and winning a prize. He is supported by shadow culture secretary Francis Maude.

Yesterday the BBC hit back at its critics. In a letter to Mr Smith, BBC chairman Sir Christopher Bland said it had acted within rules agreed by Parliament and the lottery regulator, Ofcom.

Mr Smith, who asked for a "convincing and compelling" response from the BBC over the allegations, will give his opinion on the matter tomorrow.

At yesterday's programme launch, one of the presenters, Anthea Turner, revealed that the BBC had banned any pictures of her with the scratchcard which is closely linked to the programme.

Critics say it is only by scratching off three stars on the £2 card that viewers can appear and have the chance to win the £100,000 top prize.

Ms Turner, who will present the show with Patrick Kielty, said she would only mention the scratchcard for information rather than promotion. She said she will not mention Camelot, the lottery operator.

The programme gets its first airing on Saturday.

Power struggle at soccer club

Peter Hetherington

THE family firm which has effectively controlled Newcastle United for most of the last 10 years was fighting to retain its dominance last night in the face of opposition from non-executive directors of the company which owns the club.

After 10 hours of talks at St James's Park, to discuss the scandal engulfing the club over the past week, it emerged that a plan to install Sir John Hall as chairman for a second term was facing trouble.

'They may choose or not choose to resign. However I have the image of Newcastle United to protect.'

Sir John, the multi-millionaire property developer behind the revival of Newcastle United in the mid-1990s, is willing to return — after retiring as club chairman last December — to retain the club's credibility in the City of London.

He handed over control of his family's 57 per cent stake to his son, Douglas, while the chairmanship went to Freddie Shepherd — the two men at the centre of the sleaze allegations.

But sources last night indicated that Sir Terence Harrison, chairman of Newcastle United plc, made it known at a board meeting yesterday — in advance of half-yearly

results due this morning — that he was against Sir John returning.

Douglas Hall and Mr Shepherd stayed away from yesterday's meeting. But Mr Shepherd, a former lawyer, is James's Park, who waited outside the meeting.

But the three non-executive directors of the company — Sir Terence, John Mayo and Denis Cassidy — were still pressing for the resignation of Douglas Hall and Mr Shepherd, apparently because the company needed a fresh start.

Yesterday the club was plunged into further turmoil when the Labour MP for Newcastle Central, Jim Cousins, asked police to investigate drug allegations outlined earlier this week in several newspapers. They did not involve Mr Shepherd.

The MP contacted Alan Brown, deputy chief constable of Northumbria, to outline his concerns. Mr Cousins said: "Allegations were made about several premises, including bars in my constituency, where hard drugs, including cocaine, had allegedly been taken, and clearly this could raise serious issues." Police said that they would be investigating.

If Douglas Hall and Mr Shepherd do not stand down, it is clear that the crisis will deepen. Sir Terence said yesterday he had spoken to both men over the past few days.

"They may choose or not choose to resign. However I have the image of Newcastle United to protect." A statement would be made this morning when the half-yearly results, believed to be under £10 million, are produced.



Models display designs by David Robert Wales backstage at the Alternative Fashion Week, which features the work of 50 young designers in clothing, textiles and jewellery, as well as live music. It runs until Friday at Old Spitalfields Market in the East End of London

Black groups condemn tactics of lawyers for Lawrence family

Objection to head of inquiry was 'naïve and could damage family'

Sally Pook

LAWYERS for the family of Stephen Lawrence were yesterday criticised by black campaigners for halting the inquiry into the teenager's murder over allegations that the chairman, Sir William Macpherson, was racially insensitive.

Lee Jasper, chairman of the National Black Alliance, a group representing 14 black organisations, said that any objections to Sir William should have been raised with the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, before the inquiry opened. This alliance fears the tactic could be damaging for the family.

The lawyers' tactics "did not result in the removal of the judge. They merely invited the potential for the judge to become hostile. Trying to overturn the decision at that stage was naïve — an unachievable goal."

"I would not have advised the Lawrence family to make

any objections about the judge on the first day unless they knew it was going to result in his removal."

The move provoked an angry editorial in the black newspaper *New Nation*, which yesterday condemned the move as a "stunt" and questioned the motives of the Lawrence's legal team.

The public inquiry was halted within minutes of its opening last Monday after counsel for the family demanded to see the Home Secretary.

Michael Maosfield, their QC, said the move was triggered in part by an article in the *Observer* accusing Sir William, a retired High Court judge, of being insensitive to race issues.

The judge dismissed the allegations "with contempt" and Mr Straw issued a statement saying he had complete confidence in his ability to handle the inquiry. Senior government sources said there was no question of the chairman being replaced.



Stephen Lawrence: stabbed to death in racist attack

Simon de Banya, who until a month ago was spokesman for the Stephen Lawrence Family Campaign, said: "At the outset, Neville and Doonan Lawrence, their solicitors, Imran Khan, and myself met the Home Secretary and expressed our dissatisfaction with the choice of Sir William. That was some months ago. "Mr Straw made it very clear he was not going to change his mind. I have no idea why they chose to raise the issue again on the first day of inquiry."

Marc Wadsworth, of the Anti Racist Alliance, described the opening of the public inquiry as a public relations disaster. "I have grave doubts for the future of the broad alliance of supporters who have been crucial to the success of this case if lawyers are allowed to go in for public relations disasters like this. A false start was the last thing they needed."

Sir Herman Ouseley, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, told one newspaper the tactic could be interpreted by some as "posturing". But Peter Herbert, of the Society of Black Lawyers, said the Lawrence's legal team had no choice. "There is nothing else they could have done but to raise it on the first day."

Aziz Hakeem, for Stephen's parents, said: "They feel everything that needed to be said on this matter was said by them last week. Now they feel it is time to focus on the real subject of the inquiry."

The inquiry into the murder of Stephen, who was stabbed to death in a racist attack by white youths in Edinham, south-east London, in 1993, reopens today.

Man cleared of sex crime sent back to jail for reassessment

Emily Sheffield

A CONVICTED killer and sex offender was back in prison yesterday despite being cleared of indecent assault on a 12-year-old girl.

Robert Sexton, aged 43, who served 17 years of a life sentence for the manslaughter of a teenager in Cumbria, was found not guilty at Cambridge Crown Court on Friday of the indecent assault.

But he was sent back to Bedford prison to face a discretionary panel which will decide whether he will remain in prison, even though he has committed no additional offence.

The Home Office can put offenders released on licence back behind bars if it is feared they will commit another crime.

Sexton, from Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, had denied indecently assaulting the girl in the bedroom of her home while her parents were out.

It had been alleged that Sexton, a photographer, had gone to the girl's house near Cambridge last summer and asked her to pose with only a see-through shirt on and no bra.

Karim Khalil, defending, conceded that Sexton had been "stupid and foolishly to

go to the girl's bedroom", but said that he was not a criminal.

Sexton was also convicted in 1971 of indecently assaulting a 15-year-old girl in a men's toilet.

On his release in 1994, Sexton went to work for the Olan Mills Portrait Studio in Bedford where he met the 12-year-old after she began talking to Sexton about modelling, the court heard.

Sexton, who first returned to prison last September when the allegations were made against him, is likely to spend several more months in prison there while a panel consisting of a judge, a psychiatrist and an independent member hear evidence on risk to society.

"The board can recall life sentences before they commit a crime," a Parole Board spokesman said yesterday.

"If the charge is dropped it doesn't mean the prisoner is automatically released. He has to go through a review to see the broader concerns which led him to be recalled. If he does not address the problems for the safety of the public the prisoner can be kept in prison until they have been resolved."

Brewer wins duty hearing

John Eazard

THE real ale brewer Shepherd Neame yesterday won the right to go to a crucial next stage in its challenge to Britain's 50p tax on a pint of beer. With the Prime Minister's wife, Cherie Booth QC, as its advocate, it was given leave to ask the Appeal Court to refer its case to the European Court of Justice.

It claims government duty — up to five times the rates in Europe — is in breach of European laws requiring states to harmonise duties.

Shepherd Neame's vice-chairman, Stuart Neame, said the 1p increase in last week's Budget made the case vital. It involved "the crucial principle of the Treaty of Rome precedence over a country's wish to increase duties".

G2 front

"I was sent this notice from the Texas Criminal Division that Paradise has been banned and cannot be ordered by any inmate in this particular jail system." Her tone is coolly ironic, but she can't help giggling as she tells the tale.

Toni Morrison takes tea with Katharine Viner

British claim six of first 10 places

Old stars shine on all-time top 100 pop list

Don Gislister
Arts Correspondent

IT IS, said one music critic, depressing. A poll of 600 top musicians to determine the top 100 rock and pop artists is dominated by the dinosaurs of rock.

The first woman artist comes in at number 21, while the highest placed contemporary artist with any mass youth appeal is Michael Jackson at 40. The top 10 places are taken by artists who hit the big time in the sixties and seventies.

There is no place for recent pop phenomena such as Oasis or the Spice Girls, and even the serious rock of Radiohead, whose last album was recently acclaimed by readers of a rock magazine as the best of all time, is ignored.

Topping the list, predictably, are the Beatles. At number two come the Rolling Stones, followed by Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin and Bob Dylan. With David Bowie, The Who and, somewhat astonishingly, the Police also in the top 10 places, British acts take up six of them.

The poll will confirm the Beatles as the dominant force in the century's dominant music form. Already EMI, the group's record company, is preparing another marketing push for 2000. They are to be re-branded The Band of the Millennium, with the record label promising the release of new material.

The results of the poll, conducted by the music channel VH1, will be broadcast at the end of this month in the US and later in the UK. Artists who had appeared on the channel or whose videos had been played were asked to list their top 100 acts. The responses — from the likes of

the Bee Gees, Elvis Costello, Johnny Cash and George Harrison — produced votes for more than 700, whittled down to 100.

But the results belie the image of rock and roll as a challenging, innovative or relevant art form. Instead they place it firmly in the museum — or hall of fame.

Probably the only names on the list to have made any acknowledgment of contemporary musical fashions are David Bowie, who has flirted with drum and bass, and Madonna, at number 86, whose most recent album was recorded with a dance music producer.

It is a very AOR (Adult Oriented Rock) view of popular music. Only two jazz musicians feature on the list — Miles Davis and John Coltrane — and only one reggae musician, Bob Marley. And the impact of punk, which set out to destroy the legacy of earnest, learned rock music, is neatly illustrated by the position of the Sex Pistols between Crosby, Stills and Nash and Creedence Clearwater Revival.

Broadcaster John Peel, a champion of alternative forms of music, said of the list: "How depressing. This tells us that the people who contribute to these polls are a bunch of boring old twerps. It all sounds a bit joyless if you ask me."

VH1 vice-president Bill Flanagan said: "When you're doing a survey of musicians, they're not as hung up on historical importance as much as music critics are. If it were a music historians' poll I think Chuck Berry and other artists from the 1950s would have rated much higher."

"But musicians are also big music fans, and I think the survey results show who their biggest influences are."



Top of all the pops... The Beatles: John Lennon at the mike in the Cavern Club, Liverpool, in 1963. EMI is to promote them as Band of the Millennium



Pipped by the Beatles... The Rolling Stones in 1966



Number one woman... Aretha Franklin comes 21st on the list

THE TOP 100

1. The Beatles
2. The Rolling Stones
3. Jimi Hendrix
4. Led Zeppelin
5. Bob Dylan
6. James Brown
7. David Bowie
8. Elvis Presley
9. The Who
10. The Police
11. Stevie Wonder
12. Ray Charles
13. The Beach Boys
14. Marvin Gaye
15. Eric Clapton
16. John Lennon
17. Elton John
18. Prince
19. Pink Floyd
20. The Doors
21. Aretha Franklin
22. Fleetwood Mac
23. The Eagles
24. Bob Marley
25. Van Morrison
26. Chuck Berry
27. Bruce Springsteen
28. Sly and the Family Stone
29. U2
30. Neil Young
31. The Clash
32. Joni Mitchell
33. Queen
34. Buddy Holly
35. Otis Redding
36. Little Richard
37. Al Green
38. Elvis Costello
39. Miles Davis
40. Michael Jackson
41. Janis Joplin
42. Nirvana
43. Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers
44. The Jackson Five
45. Crosby, Stills and Nash
46. Prince
47. Creedence Clearwater Revival
48. Van Halen
49. Roy Orbison
50. R.E.M.
51. BB King
52. Cream
53. Peter Dinklage
54. Grateful Dead
55. The Byrds
56. The Kinks
57. Steely Dan
58. Sam Cooke
59. Bo Diddley
60. Earth Wind and Fire
61. Smokey Robinson
62. Paul McCartney
63. Sting
64. Frank Zappa
65. James Taylor
66. Talking Heads
67. Kiss
68. The Allman Brothers
69. Pretenders
70. Stevie Nicks
71. Rod Stewart
72. Simon and Garfunkel
73. Muddy Waters
74. Velvet Underground
75. Curtis Mayfield
76. The Bee Gees
77. John Coltrane
78. Billy Joel
79. Aerosmith
80. Tina Turner
81. The Band
82. Devo
83. Iggy Pop
84. F.R.D.
85. Carole King
86. Madonna
87. Santana
88. Ramsey
89. Johnny Cash
90. Tom Waits
91. Gladys Knight and The Pips
92. The Temptations
93. The Four Tops
94. Diana Ross and The Supremes
95. Robert Johnson
96. Lynyrd Skynyrd
97. Fats Domino
98. Traffic
99. Parliament/Funkadelic
100. Paul Simon

Anger at disabled MP's increase

David Brindley, Social Services Correspondent

CAMPAIGNERS for the disabled are angry that the Commons has voted an increase of up to £20,000 in allowances of the disabled MP Anne Begg while ministers continue to question the benefits paid to other disabled people.

The campaigners are not challenging the MP's need for special help, but they say

there is a stark contrast between her treatment and that of millions of others who fear loss of their sickness and disability benefits.

Anne Begg, vice-chairwoman of the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People, said: "It feels like it's one rule for one person and another for the rest of us."

The increase in the allowances available to Ms Begg, Labour MP for Aberdeen South, was passed without comment by the few MPs

present shortly before close of business last Friday.

Ms Begg has Gaucher's disease, a genetic condition making her bones brittle, and has relied on a wheelchair for 18 years. She will be able to claim 33 per cent more than the standard MP's office costs allowance of £47,569 a year, and 33 per cent more than the additional costs allowance — in respect of a constituency home — of up to £12,287. In addition, she can claim for up to 36 return journeys to her constituency by an accompanying assistant.

A Cabinet Office spokeswoman said: "These are in recognition of extra costs faced by an MP with a disability. They are in line with arrangements for other disabled MPs."

Bernie Grant, Labour MP for Tottenham, can claim allowances 33 per cent higher than standard, on top of the basic MP's salary of £43,550 (£45,066 from next week). He has severe diabetes.

David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, can claim allowances 157 per cent higher than standard — up to £154,000 — in respect of his blindness.



MP Anne Begg: up to £20,000 more in disabled allowance

Ms Begg, a teacher, has been criticised for speaking out in support of the Government's assertion that disabled people should work if able to do so.

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World news in brief

Karen refugee camp in Thailand attacked

ABOUT 30 raiders from Burma attacked a refugee camp housing mainly Burmese Karens 24 miles inside Thailand yesterday, destroying 50 homes and wounding 14 people, according to an aid worker. Later four Thai soldiers were injured by mortar fire, apparently from the retreating raiders.

The Maw K'er camp houses more than 8,700 refugees. The raiders were said to be members of the Democratic Buddhist Karen Army (DBKA), which supports the Burmese military junta against the separatist Karen National Union, although a KNA spokesman said most of them were Burmese troops. The Bangkok Post reported at the weekend that General Khin Nyunt, a senior member of the Burmese junta, had told the Thai commander in chief, Chetta Thanajaro, that Rangoon had nothing to do with the DBKA attacks and Thailand should do whatever was necessary to stop them. — AP, Bangkok.

Rwandan nuns abducted

TWO Spanish and five Rwandan nuns from the St Anne of Charity order have been abducted in Kivumu, north-west Rwanda, it is thought by Hutu rebels, the Church authorities said yesterday. — Reuters, Kigali.

Moldova snubs market

MOLDOVA's Communist Party was leading yesterday with almost 30 per cent of the votes cast in Sunday's general election, an indication that the electorate has rejected President Petru Lucinschi's hesitant market reforms. The Communists were expected to begin talks with nationalist and centrist parties on forming a coalition. — Reuters, Kishinev.

Serbs denounce Kosovo deal

THOUSANDS of Serbs marched through the Kosovo provincial capital Pristina yesterday in protest at an agreement between Serbian and ethnic Albanian leaders to let Albanians back into the state education system, from which they have been excluded for the past seven years.

"Today's signature represents the beginning of the sellout of Kosovo," the Serb dean of Pristina University said. "We will not allow separatist children to be rocked in a Serb cradle."

The agreement is the first concession by the Serb authorities in response to the international pressure on them to stop suppressing the Albanians. — Reuters, Pristina.

Mutilation campaign steps up

MORE than 160,000 women and girls in immigrant communities in the United States may have been, or may be liable to be, subjected to genital mutilation, according to a health department estimate.

The figures were produced for a New York state congresswoman, Louise Slaughter, on the basis of a statistical analysis by the government's centres for disease control and prevention. Female circumcision was banned in the US last year, but information on the prevalence of the practice is only beginning to be collected. — New York Times.

Seychelles sticks to René

PRESIDENT Albert René and his Seychelles People's Progressive Front have won the country's presidential and parliamentary elections, state television reported yesterday.

The opposition leader James Mancham, overthrown by Mr René in a 1977 military coup, polled less than 12 per cent to Mr René's 64 per cent, and his Democratic Party lost four of its five seats. Wavel Ramkalawan's United Opposition party won its first three seats. — Reuters, Victoria.

Try Clinton, say Iraqi MPs

THE Iraqi parliament branded President Bill Clinton and his predecessor George Bush war criminals yesterday and called for them to be tried for the suffering caused by the Gulf war and the UN sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. The resolution, was a response to a US Senate vote calling for President Saddam Hussein to be indicted. — Reuters, Baghdad.

Florida chair back in action

GERALD STANO, who confessed to 41 murders, was executed in Florida's electric chair yesterday, its first use since March 25 last year when flames were seen to shoot from behind the condemned man's face mask. That incident led to a series of attempts to have the chair banned as a cruel and unusual punishment. Three more are due to die in the coming week. — AP, Starke.

Centenarian's smashing time

A 104-YEAR-OLD Swede crossed red lights, smashed into parked cars and mounted a kerb during an outing in his 30-year-old car, Swedish papers reported yesterday, adding that he could be the oldest person ever to face driving charges. — Reuters, Stockholm.

Good vibrations



Carlos Mario Sosa Rosiles, a mentally handicapped two-year-old, closes his eyes as a dolphin called Venus nuzzles him gently during his first session of neuro-stimulating therapy in a dolphinarium at Mexico City zoo yesterday. The dolphins' high-frequency noises are said to stimulate children with motor neuron disabilities, autism and other mental handicaps. Some experts say the children are helped just by close contact with the dolphins. The doctor running the project says it has improved the children's co-ordination and confidence. PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW WINNING

Caught on the fiddle

AN AUSTRIAN with a bout of wanderlust, who burgled a house to finance a dream holiday to South America, has been sentenced to two and a half years in prison for stealing a rare Stradivarius-style violin.

The unemployed 36-year-old from Linz did not realise he had stolen anything of note until he approached a Salzburg art dealer and offered to sell him his booty, including expensive bows and the 100-year-old violin, crafted by Jean Baptiste Vuillaume and valued at about \$60,000. — Kate Connolly, Prague.

Dirty money men clean up

NEW money is in such short supply in the central Indian city of Bhopal that people are wrapping ragged notes in plastic so they can be reused. Without the plastic, the old money might disintegrate as it changes hands.

Enterprising businessmen are buying up soiled notes at a discount elsewhere in the country — where not even beggars will accept them — and offloading them in Bhopal. — AP, New Delhi.

Yeltsin sacks his cabinet

Political script rewritten

Big money/Business tycoons have great clout behind scenes

James Meek in Moscow

THE only advance warning of Boris Yeltsin's bombshell came on Sunday, when the national television channel NTV screened a 25-minute interview with a powerful tycoon, Boris Berezovsky.

Mr Berezovsky, a billionaire with interests from oil to newspapers, made no direct mention of government changes, but his sudden return to Russia from Switzerland and his free-ranging comments on the 2000 presidential election campaign suggest he knew what was in the wind, and might even have helped provoke it.

President Yeltsin's usually well-informed press chief, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, was kept in the dark until the last moment. Ordinary Russians were baffled by the sudden ditching of such a familiar figure as Viktor Chernomyrdin, prime minister for most of the post-Soviet era.

"We thought Yeltsin was betting on stability," said Yeltsin's press secretary, Yelena Yemalova, a grocery wholesaler. "It's as if there's something behind it all which we know nothing about."

What seems to have happened is a classic strike by Mr Yeltsin in consultation with a tiny group of aides, setting the scene for a power struggle in which the dividing line between politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen such

as Mr Berezovsky becomes increasingly ill-defined.

According to some version, the president, determined to secure the succession for himself or at least choose the candidate to be backed by Russia's oligarchic new capitalists, had been con-

vinced by co-operation with the authorities. Now the situation will alter radically. There will be a long struggle with the communist and nationalist-dominated parliament to get a new prime minister approved.

If Mr Yeltsin — as some suggest he planned all along — puts forward a candidate unacceptable to the Duma, he can dissolve parliament and call new elections. There is even a theory that he might defy the constitution and call early presidential elections.

The politician once seen as the president's heir apparent, the young liberal minister Boris Nemtsov, is in limbo, although having brought the acting prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, into the old government, he can expect a good job in the new one.

Other leading presidential contenders — Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov, former para-

troop general Alexander Lebed and communist chief Gennady Zyuganov — are little affected by the upheaval, though they will regret the demise of Mr Chernomyrdin, whom they will feel they could have beaten in an open fight.

The pervasive spectre of Mr Berezovsky and his ilk, weaving in and out of the corridors of power while advancing their business interests, is a sign of the role a handful of big bankers and industrialists will play in the coming battle.

Mr Berezovsky believes he and his associates bought victory for Mr Yeltsin in 1996 with their financial backing and that the candidate they choose in 2000 will fight off the communist-nationalist challenge just as easily. "It is in our interests," he said, "to ensure continuity of power."

The trouble with Boris, page 8; Leader comment, page 5

Fresh ideas sought as oil slump hits

Economy/Lack of presidential support may neuter radicals

Tom Whitehouse in Moscow

THE Russian economic crisis which prompted President Yeltsin to dismiss his government yesterday was brought to a head by the recent collapse in world oil prices.

The prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, proved surprisingly immune to economic Asian flu, but could not survive the declining value of oil and gas, which provide half Russia's hard currency earnings.

Because speculators have retreated from developing markets since Asia's economic crisis, the only short-term way for the Russian government to replenish its budget — issuing short-term bonds — has become more difficult and expensive.

"There just isn't enough liquidity in the economy to cover the most basic government obligations," said Al Breach of the Russian-European Centre for Economic Policy.

"And because the rouble looks increasingly vulnerable, President Yeltsin really had

to make a radical change." But Mr Yeltsin said nothing yesterday to indicate that he could deliver a new government with new ideas. He has always avoided responsibility for economic policies and if, fearing loss of popularity, he again gives only rhetorical support to reform, the ministerial changes will be ineffective.

Figures released last week show that, far from diminishing, public sector wage arrears have increased by more than a fifth to 7,636 billion

roubles (£750 million). In human terms, the figure confirms that the vast majority of Russians have little to show for seven years of Yeltsin government.

"The government has not solved key problems," Mr Yeltsin admitted on television yesterday. "Many people do not feel changes for the better."

The previous government reshuffle, in March last year, when Mr Yeltsin made exactly the same call as he made yesterday for "a more deci-

sive and energetic" team, proved — by his own admission yesterday — a failure. His appointment of the two so-called "young reformers", Anatoly Chubais and Boris Nemtsov, as deputy prime ministers did not bring economic improvements.

Mr Chubais's decision to an unspecified government role removes the IMF's favourite politician from the Kremlin. If Mr Nemtsov is also demoted, the government could be without a strong pro-Western reformer.

The new acting prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, fits the young reformer image — he is only 35 and has won a reputation for liberalism in regional government — but his political inexperience bodes ill for the expected struggle with parliament.

Although he is only a temporary figurehead, he will present Mr Yeltsin's new team to the communist-dominated Duma for its approval. The Duma will strongly resist the promotion of a reformist who threatens budget cuts.

Despite the stormy political outlook, the markets reacted calmly.

Foreign policy priorities are unlikely to change. The foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, described himself as the "acting" minister, but said he expected to be reappointed soon.

President Yeltsin will take the limelight again on Thursday at a Moscow summit with President Jacques Chirac and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, billed as the first in a series of "troika" summits.

Fired allies may be back for more

Strategy/A clear plan is behind what looks like a whim

James Meek in Moscow

BORIS YELTSIN'S dismissal of his entire government, which was probably decided only at the weekend, smacks of the caprice which has cast doubt on his mental grip in recent months.

Coming immediately after his return to work from a latest bout of illness, it would be tempting to assume that the 67-year-old Russian president, worn out by heart bypass surgery and the chaos of office, had taken to making arbitrary, tear-like gestures in an attempt to defy his failing health.

The truth is different. Although Mr Yeltsin looked old and slow on television, he was the same flawed but cunning leader who always was — with an instinctive sense of the need for reform, but no clear idea how to achieve it, a flair for political melodrama and a willingness to ditch old favourites to leave himself a clear field.

The prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, is only the latest in a long line of allies to be cast aside. Former prime minister Yegor Gaidar, close friend and bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov, and the former general who brought him victory in the 1996 elections,

Alexander Lebed, were all dumped when they became too unpopular or too powerful.

It is a measure of the success — in personal terms — of Mr Yeltsin's leadership style that many of those he roughly ejects from government later return as loyal servants.

The privatisation guru Anatoly Chubais, who was sacked by the president in 1995, returned humbly a year later. Yesterday Mr Yeltsin fired him again.

Applying what he described yesterday as "a natural process in the renewal of power", Mr Yeltsin brings fresh faces into the government, allows them to take the blame for policy failures that are often the result of his reluctance to take risks, then presents himself as a popular avenger by sacking them.

Although Mr Yeltsin sagged the dismissal of his government with talk of the need to make economic reform work, he was candid about what was really on his mind: presidential elections in 2000, when he may stand for a third term, despite doubts about his constitutional eligibility.

In effect, he was telling Russians that he was subordinating the work of the government to the task of getting himself or his chosen successor elected.

"The elections in 2000 are very important for us," he said on television. "This is the future of Russia." He could have said the future of Boris Yeltsin, but it is not clear whether he distinguishes between the two.



Kiriyenko: Respected by all, but without political clout



Chernomyrdin: Did deals where Yeltsin failed



Chubais: Radical hated by opposition for privatisation



Nemtsov: Outspoken attacks on 'oligarchic capitalists'

Technocrat for a temporary fix

Power players/Many are waiting in the wings for a chance to star in the main role

Tom Whitehouse in Moscow

reformers and conservatives by saying the government should be responsible for the social needs of miners.

Because he lacks the clout to tame the Communist-dominated lower house of parliament, the Duma, he is likely to be replaced quickly by a more authoritative figure. But his appointment, however temporary, is a boost to his career and may indicate the new government's likely character and position.

It was Boris Nemtsov, the previous cabinet's deputy prime minister, who invited Mr Kiriyenko to join the federal government. Both men are regarded as reformers, prepared to confront the powerful oil and gas lobby.

For a long time Mr Chernomyrdin was the linch-pin between the government and the Duma, dominated by Communists and nationalists. But after his dismissal yesterday, his political career could be finished. He has little natural vote-pulling power and the oil and gas lobby that has made him a millionaire might choose other people to back for the presidential race in 2000.

Anatoly Chubais: The former deputy prime minister is a fast survivor, for long the only surviving member of the radical team that President Yeltsin started out with. Hated by the opposition for allegedly rigging privatisation in favour of his banker friends, the burly redhead, aged 42, is the favourite to take over as head of Russia's monopoly electricity distributor.

Yuri Luzhkov and Alexander Lebed: Among the front-runners in the battle to succeed President Yeltsin in two years' time. Moscow's mayor and the former national security adviser are both above the fray and biding their time.

Mr Lebed hopes his bid next month for the governorship of a Siberian region will lead to the Kremlin. Mr Luzhkov strenuously disclaims presidential ambitions, on what resembles campaign visits to Russia's regions, where he distributes largesse and bangs the nationalist drum.

lieutenant for five years. Yet as his tackling of a Chechen hostage crisis showed, he was capable of doing deals where Mr Yeltsin could not.

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Le Pen fails in Marseille

Paul Webster in Paris

AN ATTEMPT by Jean-Marie Le Pen to seize control of the Marseille region for the racist National Front failed yesterday as a national outcry at the dangers of extremism tore right-wing parties apart.

Jacques Chirac went on television to appeal to conservatives to rally around the presidency. The Gaullist head of state wants to create a new movement to oppose right-wing extremism and provide a balance to the increasingly powerful Socialist-led administration.

Mr Le Pen persuaded five right-wing leaders to ally with the National Front in other regional elections last week, giving his movement its first real taste of shared power. He demanded a reciprocal gesture from the Gaullists and the centre-right to enable him to govern the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur assembly in Marseille.

But public outrage and presidential anger at opportunist pacts with the extremists obliged conservatives to drop their original plan to back Mr Le Pen, hours before the Marseille assembly met.

A Socialist former foreign minister, Michel Vauzelle, was elected chairman of the region based on Marseille, is congratulated by the justice minister, Elizabeth Guigou.



Socialist Michel Vauzelle, elected chairman of the region based on Marseille, is congratulated by the justice minister, Elizabeth Guigou.

Socialists take key regional chairmanships as Chirac opens fight to wrest conservatism back from the National Front

the Ile de France assembly covering Paris, another Socialist, Jean-Paul Huchon, was set to win after Gaullist councillors refused National Front support.

The voting took place against the background of street protests organised by students and human rights organisations.

In Toulouse, the outgoing Midi-Pyrénées regional president, Marc Cens, was re-elected with National Front backing but immediately resigned. He was the second leader of the Union for French Democracy (UDF) to refuse a deal. Five provincial leaders have been expelled for accepting deals.

The Gaullist mayor of Le Havre, Antoine Rufenacht, outgoing chairman in Haute-Normandie, dropped out of the race for chairman be-

cause the National Front was in a position to arbitrate.

In the overseas region of La Réunion, a Communist, Paul Vergès, twin brother of the lawyer Jacques Vergès, was elected chairman.

A rethink on the right was inevitable in the wake of the departmental (county council) elections on Sunday, in which the left took more than 400 seats and 11 councils from the right as voters withdrew their support from the Gaullists and the centre-right UDF. The left now controls 31 county councils, the right 62.

Summing up a week of crisis in the right-wing parties, the former foreign minister Hervé de Charette said the alliances made with Mr Le Pen's followers were as important as the May 1968 student riots and François Mitterrand's presidential victory in 1981.

"It is the ruin of the French right," he added. "Perhaps we'll soon know who are the authors of this sinister plot prepared over a long period. Those who have saved their seats by joining with the National Front have done it by sacrificing the republic."

Prominent conservatives poured contempt on leaders who accepted the National Front's conditions, describing them as traitors.

In Lyon, Raymond Barre, the city's mayor and a former prime minister, attacked his political ally Charles Millon, a former defence minister, saying he had created an "unhealthy climate" by accepting an extremist deal to serve his seat as president of the Rhône-Alpes region.

Gaullist MPs blamed the former secretary-general Jean-François Mancel, who started the revolt, for the loss of scores of county council seats. But yesterday he said that it was crucial to start talking with Mr Le Pen about his anti-immigration plans.

The press was nearly unanimous in condemning the rise of the National Front. Only the right-wing Figaro, reflecting the views of its letter pages, played down the crisis, calling it a "nervous breakdown" caused by a sudden awareness that the National Front played a key role in French politics.



A worker from Warsaw's Ursus tractor factory burns an EU flag in front of the finance ministry during protests last week. PHOTOGRAPH: LESZEK WOJNICKI

Angry Poles prepare to confront EU

Financial concerns are destroying Euro-euphoria as accession talks approach, writes Neil Bowdler in Wysokie Mazowieckie

ALL the European Union has brought Dariusz Sapinski so far is losses.

He is the manager of Poland's biggest dairy, Mlekovita, which was doing good business exporting powdered milk to German wholesalers until Brussels introduced a blanket ban on Polish milk imports after EU inspectors ruled that the country's dairies posed a health hazard.

Mr Sapinski, who had invested 213 million in EU-manufactured machinery in an attempt to improve hygiene standards, is fuming at the blow he believes the ban has dealt to his company's image.

producers has fallen across the world. Our reputation's been destroyed for no reason," he shouts.

As for Poland's future membership of Europe's rich man's club, he is increasingly cynical: "We're offering them the country on a plate," he says. "Foreign companies are buying up the best part of Poland."

Mr Sapinski's mood is relatively bright compared with the sullen atmosphere in surrounding villages. Many young people from this eastern region have moved into cities and towns in search of work. For those who remain, the EU has become a synonym for a new capitalist order which has brought falling

living standards and lengthening queue.

Two thousand of them took to the streets of Warsaw early this month with banners declaring that Poland's EU membership would be achieved literally "over our dead bodies".

Last week workers at Warsaw's troubled Ursus tractor factory hurled EU flags and tractor tyres outside the Polish finance ministry.

The European Union wants to liquidate 90 per cent of our agriculture," screamed the workers' leader, Zygmunt Wrzodak.

the Solidarity-led government as it prepares for the start of accession talks in Brussels next Tuesday.

Euro-euphoria has given way to escalating fears about the economic and social costs of membership. A recent survey showed that 55 per cent of Poles believe their country will be only a "weak, second-category member".

Wary of a public backlash, the government is charging into the negotiations promising not to capitulate to Brussels. It has rejected attempts to impose a long "transition period" on Polish farmers which would make them ineligible for funding from a reformed Common Agricultural Policy after accession.

Growing unrest among farmers, who make up a quarter of Poland's workforce, has put pressure on

stators have said the right of Poles to work abroad immediately after accession is a key objective.

"If we're made subject to lengthy transition periods, we'll be nothing less than a poor cousin with its hand out, pleading for help," says Jan Kulakowski, Poland's chief negotiator.

Such public pronouncements are unwelcome to the European Commission, which will broker negotiations with EU applicants. It has its hands full persuading present EU members to forgo regional aid and agricultural price supports to facilitate expansion. With nearly five million Germans out of work, demands for free labour movement serve only to "raise the temperature in EU countries", says Rolf Tilmans, the commission's ambassador in Warsaw.

Riot over Kenyan ad for rich students

Lucy Hannan in Nairobi

POLICE armed with live ammunition and tear-gas were forced to retreat by stone-throwing university students in running battles in central Nairobi that lasted all day yesterday.

Witnesses said a policeman was critically injured when he was hit in the head by a stone thrown by students who went on the rampage outside the University of Nairobi. Three more police were seriously injured and two were slightly hurt when they tried to break up rioters.

Using slingshots to keep paramilitary and riot police off the campus, students burned cars and smashed shop windows. Government radio announced that the university was closed in the afternoon.

The riots followed an advertisement in the popular Daily Nation which offered degrees in medicine and health "for privately sponsored students" with minimal educational requirements.

Students say university places are being sold off by a corrupt administration — the advert comes soon after a recently exposed scandal involving the sale of university degree certificates.

Africa reaches out for Clinton

Steve Holland in Accra

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton arrived in Africa to a tumultuous reception yesterday but at one stage the crowds came almost too close for comfort.

Mr Clinton, who began his tour of six African states in Ghana, delivered his keynote speech in the capital's Independence Square and walked to meet some of the estimated crowd of 250,000 wall-wishers.

Wearing a dark suit, he was also struggling to cope with the unfamiliar tropical heat and humidity at the start of what will be his longest trip as president.

A teeming crowd of Ghanaians clamoured to shake his hand and surge forward — almost knocking over metal security barriers and sending a flutter through White House security.

Looking in danger of being overwhelmed, the US president with a look of consternation on his face waved his arm and cried: "Back up."

Mr Clinton, who was accompanied by his wife Hillary, was to spend less than

10 hours in Ghana. He flies on to Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana and the former French colony of Senegal.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said later that Mr Clinton had appealed to the crowd for restraint "because he saw people in the front that were getting squeezed and he was trying to get people to back off a bit".

The crowd on the sprawling square situated on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea was so big that Ghanaian security had to work hard to control it.

Earlier, police used clubs and belts to clear crowds out of the way of the Clinton motorcade on the route from the airport. Some people they chased on horseback.

Addressing Peace Corps volunteers later, he marvelled at the crowd at Independence Square and the heat.

"The welcome I received in Independence Square today is the largest welcome I have ever received anywhere, and all day long. This is clearly the warmest welcome I have ever received," he said. — Reuters



President Clinton shakes hands with Ghanaians at Independence Square in Accra yesterday at the start of his tour of Africa. PHOTOGRAPH: GREG GIBSON

Hebron family left bruised but unbeaten

Julian Borger in Qiqale

WITH her husband and eldest son in military detention, Zuhur al-Atrash was left to sit among the remnants of her home yesterday and reflect on the vicissitudes of a month under Israeli rule.

At the beginning of March, army bulldozers arrived in Qiqale, her home village, and demolished the family house. It had been built without an Israeli permit.

Two weeks later, a group of rabbis made their way up the same steep and rocky path the bulldozers had climbed. Watched by journalists, they picked up shovels and helped the family redig the foundations of their shattered home.

On Sunday, a sizeable force of soldiers and policemen arrived to confiscate their tools. They beat Mrs Atrash, her

husband Yusuf, their son aged 16 and daughter aged 16. Then they arrested them.

The family have the ill-fortune to live on a hill overlooking a strategic road between Jewish settlements ringing the Palestinian West Bank city of Hebron. With every month that goes by without progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, the struggle over territory becomes more bitter. Demolition orders are hanging over more than 1,000 Palestinian families on the West Bank who live near settlements or roads used by settlers.

Film of the arrests shows the family being beaten and kicked furiously.

Mrs Atrash was knocked to the ground, handcuffed and dragged by her hair so that her shirt was almost pulled off her. "I was ashamed and scared. I said I would walk to the jeep myself but they would not let me," she said.

When her eldest son Hussam and daughter Manal came to her aid they were knocked down and beaten, and Manal is still suffering the effects.

A video recording by a journalist showed Mrs Atrash, still cuffed, trying to shield her son with her own body. Mr Atrash — who had been quoted the previous day singing the praise of the helpful rabbis — was also beaten, kicked and struck with rifle-butts.

All four were detained in the police station at Kiryat Arba, the nearest Jewish settlement, and charged with obstruction of justice. The justice in question was a high court ruling last month rejecting their appeal for planning permission to build on the site.

The reason was the proximity of the family's land to a set-aside road designed to bypass Palestinian towns, which — under Israeli regulations — requires a security belt on either side. Soon after the high court ruling, the home was demolished, forcing Zuhur, Yusuf and their 10 children into tents. Insisting they had no alternative shelter, they began to rebuild.

Peter Lerner, a spokesman for the Israeli civil administration, said yesterday: "There is no point in building bypass roads if they're no longer going to bypass anything." The family were arrested because they

"showed some resistance" to the confiscation of their building tools.

After lawyers intervened on Sunday night, Mrs Atrash and her daughter were released. Mr Atrash was offered freedom if he signed a document promising not to rebuild his house. He refused, and both he and Hussam were still being held last night in a nearby military camp.

By yesterday evening, the Rabbis for Human Rights had returned in solidarity. Arik Ascherman, their head, said the rabbis would continue to take part in the reconstruction of the house and stand vigil outside the military jail.

Wedge between two contrary forces in modern Israeli life, the Atrash family have little doubt which is the stronger. Mr Atrash's brother Ahmed said: "The rabbis have words but the soldiers have the guns."

Read the latest European news without using a phrasebook.

The Guardian

Comment

Diary

Matthew Norman

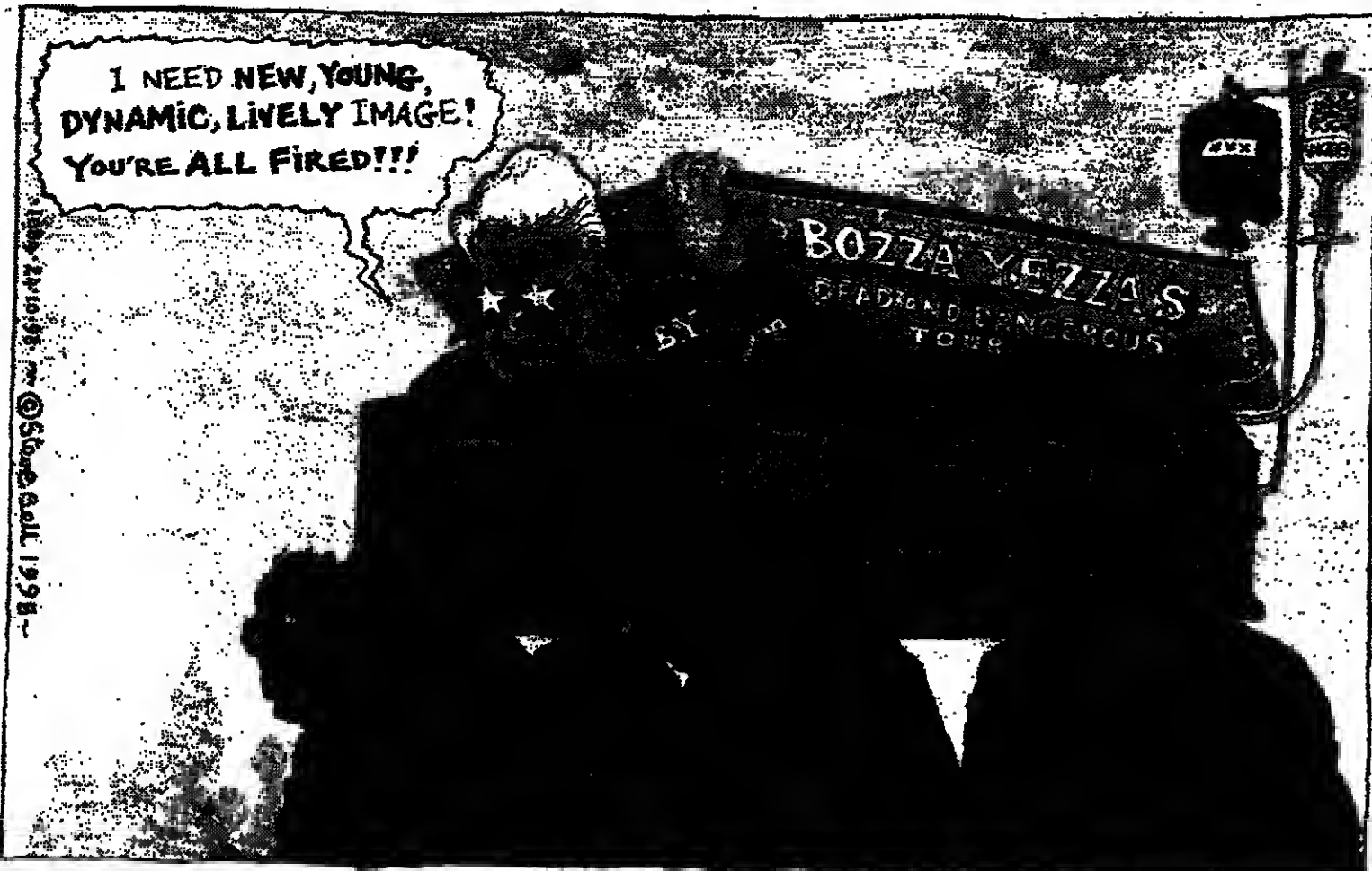
THE Education Secretary David Blunkett has undergone a most dramatic personality change. During a Commons debate last week, you will recall, he was bawling Diane Abbott like a comedy club heckler. Now he appears to think he is Mary Whitehouse. Having attacked the spending of public money on staging Mark Ravenhill's *Shopping and Fucking*, because of the play's bad language, Mr Blunkett has sent back tickets to a production of *Brassed Off*, at the Crucible in Sheffield, for the same reason. He has asked for a credit to see something less risqué. Perhaps next month's world snooker finals might be safe, now that Alex Higgins isn't involved. Or might the prospect of hearing the referee use the term "touching ball" prove too much? What a delicate plant he is, this Little Lord Fauntleroy of New Labour. The Diary calls on Frank Dobson to take him in hand, and roughen up these smooth edges with a barrage of his filthiest jokes.

I WAS saddened to hear of Juliette Binoche's late withdrawal from the Oscars. The actress's doctor forbade her making the journey to LA from London, apparently, on account of her sprained ankle. It's a shame they couldn't get Miss Binoche hooked on to one of the traditional Jumbos, the ones with fuel-powered engines and pilots. These new Boeing Pedalo 747s just aren't the same at all.

IN the Sunday Times is news of my old friend Mandy Mandelson's recent weekend "of culture and reflection" with Charles and Camilla at Sandringham. According to an unnamed fellow guest, the winsome member for Hartlepool was not at ease. "He was definitely a bit awkward," this person comments. "He looked like he didn't know why he was there." This is not good. If Mandy is to mix in high society — and his extraordinary bluntness is thought to involve the Foreign Office — it is of the first import that he is comfortable. To this end, I am planning to arrange a series of tutorials for him with John Morgan, author of *Debutant's New Guide to Etiquette and Modern Manners*. A pager message to Oofy Weg-Prosser meets with familiar silence, but we will not easily be deterred.

A CORRECTION has appeared in the new title Sunday Business. "Our Wednesday edition referred to Gordon Brown's plans for Cheating A Fair Society," it reads. "This should have read Creating A Fair Society."

A CALL to Michael Winner about the Sandy Lane Hotel in Barbados — a favourite of his now hunched and fugitive chairman of Newcastle — detonates a bombshell. "He's picked a very bad time to go," says Michael. "They're about to pull down the entire building. But it should be rebuilt by September 1999... I've booked my place for the Millennium already." You've what? You're jumping ship, aren't you? A long pause ensues. "I shall be surrounded by British people," says Michael, with dignity. "I shall give a little party, as always, for a few close showbiz friends. I hope Mr Cleeve will be there. He usually comes, as does Mr Chris Rea." (A list of other potential guests follows: O wee, O wee for the lack of space.) There is a consolation — a pair of his pants is to be kept on standby in Greenwich, should the roof of the Dome not be ready in time — but it won't be the same without their owner. This is very hard to bear.



Is the Pope a Catholic? Yes — and that's bad news for dictators



Hugo Young

WHEN Kennedy went to Berlin, the world heard what he said. When Reagan spoke, the world was obliged to listen. When Clinton goes to Africa, the world thinks only about his private parts. But even if Clinton's life was sitcom-pure, there wouldn't be a great audience gathering to watch this rare excursion. For what he has to say will be utterly banal. It's drained of force by his fixation on the audience back home, and by America's paralysing lack of ambition to take a moral risk in the wider world.

President Clinton is not, except by formal measurements of economic size and military potential, a world leader. He does not lead the world. He does not seem to want to. He confers a fleeting blessing on Ghana, Uganda and other countries sufficiently reformed for the US to approve of. He'll be pleased to stand alongside Nelson Mandela, his sullied image absorbing what it can from an incontestable hero. But context as well as character debars Clinton from leadership. Americans are reluctant to see their leader take a difficult stand of any kind, and he would not dare disoblige them. Congress, in any case, wouldn't let it happen. Modern democracy consists of reading the polls, taking the pulse, struggling to be all things to all men and women, never confronting them with ideas they might not want to hear.

Leaving Africa as Clinton arrived was a real leader. Pope John Paul II is the only true world leader at large today. The frail old man who left Nigeria collects a massive audience, not just as the vicar of God but because he has a message. Can any other voice in the world draw such stee-

tion? No. The Pope poses a problem for liberals, especially liberal Catholics like me. But it's clear, in the end, where we have to come down. Regrettable though it is to say so, there are certain messages of transcendent wisdom that only an unaccountable autocrat now seems able to utter.

John Paul II, in his 20th year, is as far as politics goes, a failure. His conduct of his office has been, in the political sense, a disaster. This began with his view of the Faith, though that surely wasn't itself to be deplored. He may be rigid in his interpretation of revealed truth, unyielding in his rebukes for all kinds of sexual behaviour except one. He rejects all moral relativism. But if a Pope doesn't stand against moral relativism, who will?

Less easy to defend is his administration of the Church. It is possible for a Pope to reject moral relativism, while acknowledging the merits of the ecclesiastical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, which paved the way for a less authoritarian and Rome-centred regime, in keeping with the needs of the modern world. In several countries — Austria, Ireland, Brazil — some catastrophic episcopal appointments have seen churches divided and congregations dwindling, with a consequent enfeebling of the very moral reformation for which John Paul has stood, from the start of his papacy.

So he is very poor at politics. And he has a complicated attitude to freedom. Terrible things have happened to the freedom of Catholic theologians, even as their leader has sent out the most resonant signals in favour of religious freedom elsewhere: he was the first Pope to enter a synagogue, and the first to

visit a Moslem country. While internally he has been a policeman, externally he's a stoic and innovative visionary.

This is the paradox historians will have to confront, but on which, I think, they should arrive at a favourable verdict. Wherever he has gone, especially in his later years, this Pope has been able to say the difficult things, and is often the only person whom his audience has ever heard saying them. So it was in Nigeria, an unusually squalid dictatorship, indulging in every kind of abuse of fundamental freedoms, against which our famous democracies have done no better than wait a limp-wristed hand, declaring for sanctions but not imposing them, muttering against the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa but continuing to nurture the international oil company against whom he was mobilising local protest.

JOHAN PAUL II was magnificently clear. He told the dictator, General Abacha, to his face that Nigeria must strive for honest efforts to foster harmony and guarantee respect for human rights. He railed against "intimidation and domination of the poor... [and] arbitrary exclusion of individuals and groups from public life". Every speech and sermon he gave, before enormous crowds, was of this stamp. One would call them fearless — except that the Pope had nothing to fear.

And that, surely, is the saint's journey, every man's justification for his life. Occupying a place of such eminence, he could easily descend into the same banalities as the political leaders, but never chooses to do so. He uses his invulnerability for

the righteous purposes. In Cuba he made the same defiant claim to a universal system of values as in Nigeria. In Latin America, while appointing bishops and viscerally rejecting the Marxist taint of liberation theology, he has usually spoken like a liberation theologian himself, and continued the transformation of the Roman Church from a supporter into an enemy of the dictators.

THE uncomfortable part of this is that it springs from the same stem as his intolerance. John Paul's severity in defence of the married lifestyle, the all-male and unmarried priesthood, the unbaptised infants and the unimpeded conception is of a piece with his attacks on totalitarian politics and his ceaseless preaching against the evils of consumerist capitalism. He is saying: Here I stand, these are the rules of life that higher authority decrees, here are the standards to which we should aspire, such are the axioms by which humanity might do better for itself.

One doesn't have to accept all these rules to see the value of a public man who is prepared to speak for them. It has become an exceptional performance to be addressed by one who is a leader not a follower, who isn't sidling on and nodding up who deals in challenges not comforts; who gives us propositions to reject, not platitudes spun and doctored to be unrejectable. Liberal relativism has not turned out to make such a perfect world that we can't learn from its opposite. Which is why the Pope has more divisions, in a time when war no longer sets the moral compass, than Bill Clinton.

Racist terror at the door

Paul Foot



IVE BEEN talking to a brave woman, Alison Moore, a primary school teacher, who was born in London in 1957. When she recovered consciousness after being relentlessly punched and kicked by four young thugs as she left her school in the dark six weeks ago, she assumed she had just been unlucky. "I thought at first that any teacher who had come out of the school at that time and asked these youngsters what they were doing — as I had done — would have got the same treatment."

She was found under a hedge, moaning in pain, outside Sandhurst junior school, Catford, South London, by the headmistress, and rushed to hospital, suffering from severe internal bleeding. Five days later, on February 14, still in intense pain, she was allowed home to her 28-year-old daughter.

On February 22, early in the evening, a man delivered a letter through her front door. It was a crude death threat. For the first time Alison thought of another motive for the attack on her — she is black, the only black teacher at the school. "Somehow they had found out my name and where I live," she tells me. "I was absolutely petrified." She contacted the local police, who called in their racial incident unit at Hither Green. They gave her a panic hunt.

"Every night was a nightmare," Alison goes on. "On the night of March 13/14, as usual, I could not sleep. At half past two in the morning, I heard a noise and went downstairs. As I walked into the kitchen, I saw that a window had been forced open. A man was standing outside in a balcony. He stood there, waiting for me to see him and then he ran away. I pressed the panic button and the police came in three minutes. The kitchen door was daubed all over with swastikas — and the letters NF."

ALISON went on: "I've always thought of myself as a strong sort of person, but I must tell you that I'm scared out of my wits. I seem to shake all the time in fright. I have lost nearly a stone. I've come home today for a lunch I'd arranged ages ago for Mothers' Day but I can't live here any more — my little girl and I are staying with friends. I hope to find another home soon."

"I want to tell you, though, that I am utterly determined to go back to teach at Sandhurst. I was taken on last September as a newly

qualified teacher, not a black teacher, and I feel very honoured to have got the job. It is a great school, and I have enjoyed every minute of my work there. Since the attack, everyone at the school has been wonderful. The headmistress or one of her staff have been to see me every day. The police have always been on hand when I wanted them. They are treating this as a racist attack. The union — the National Union of Teachers — have been absolutely brilliant. The local secretary and his deputy are always coming to see me, and calling support meetings."

"THE other day I went to a school assembly for which I had arranged the music. I went in the headmistress's car and as we got near the school my teeth were chattering and I could hardly breathe for fright. But I'm glad I did it, because the support from the children was so wonderful. They couldn't really get on with the assembly because the children kept stopping and turning round to wave and smile at me."

I asked Alison what could be done to stop such thuggery in future. "After Dunblane," she said, "there is no excuse for not spending money on school security. If there had been a surveillance camera outside that school building

'A kitchen window had been forced open. A man standing outside was wearing a balaclava. I pressed the panic button'

that night, the thugs would have been identified and locked up by now. In general, I think schools should spend more time and put more effort into teaching people not to be bullies and not to be racists. Those young men must have been to school somewhere — perhaps their parents are racists. We need all the time to fight against the menace of racism."

To all that, I add this. Stephen Lawrence was murdered not far from Sandhurst Junior School. This part of London harbours racist gangs, inspired by fascist propaganda, which glorifies bludgeoning and murdering people because of the colour of their skin. They represent a tiny minority, universally hated and despised. Tolerating them is tolerating what happened to Stephen Lawrence and Alison Moore. Perhaps the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, which gets under way this week, should extend its terms of reference to take evidence from people like Alison Moore, and make some practical recommendations about how these gangs can be identified, isolated and stopped.

Sacking the government won't save Russia

The trouble with Boris

David Hearst

FOR close on seven years, successive Western leaders, economists and other missionaries have been talking up the prospects of Russia's recovery. Their endorsements have collectively formed a Good News Bible for Boris Yeltsin's reforms.

When Yeltsin's first reformer Yegor Gaidar lifted state controls on prices at a stroke, inflation was predicted to last for only a couple of months. Instead it turned into hyperinflation. When the mafia took over the reins of business and local government throughout Russia, this was regarded as a regrettable but natural process inherent in the birthpangs of the market economy. Russia's robber barons would in the end need a banking system. When Yeltsin stormed his own parliament, the ends

justified the means. The presidential powers that Yeltsin secured were favourably compared to that of a French president. When the tanks rolled into Chechnya, it was not Yeltsin but his hawkish advisers, the so-called party of war who had sent the ill-fated expedition on its way. Yeltsin himself disappeared for a mysteriously urgent operation on his nose.

Each year the economy has been "just about" to turn the corner of the greatest industrial decline since European Russia was invaded by Germans. But each year the reformers plead for more time, as Gaidar did when he was sacked by Yeltsin and replaced by Viktor Chernomyrdin. The tolerance shown to Boris Yeltsin, in sickness or in health, drunk or sober, is simply explained. He has suited what a collective of Western governments perceived as their short-term

interests. Had a communist or nationalist president of Russia bombed his own parliament, opposition, or invaded a part of his own state, it is doubtful whether the International Monetary Fund would still be funding him to the tune of \$11 billion.

The immediate objectives of Western foreign policy were the dismantling of the former communist state's most effective organs — the KGB, the military industrial complex, and the army — and the separation of Russia from its backyard, principally Ukraine, but also in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Far East. Gone was an economy that produced tanks and missile casings so cheaply that no one knew how to price them. Gone was a world power to rival Nato. Yeltsin was indeed our man in Moscow. But gone too was an industrial economy. Each year Russia became more

not less, reliant on its exports of oil and gas. Every precious metal, every rare material that had not been screwed down, was flogged off in the desperate search for cash. The current economic crisis derived not so much from a record 57

A weak Russia is a recipe for either disintegration or fascism.

billion roubles in unpaid wages in the private sector and seven billion in the public sector, but from the falling world price of oil. Russia is now closer to a third than it is to a first world economy. Throughout his turbulent reign of office, Yeltsin has shown a remarkable gift for seizing the political initia-

tive and wrong-footing the opposition. Be he the first secretary in Yegor Gaidar, who obediently bulldozes the Ipatiev House where the Romanovs were shot by the bolsheviks, be he the populist democrat who rides on trams, campaigning against party privilege, be he the growing tear barking at his nervous courtiers, Yeltsin has an instinctive feel for power. A man without principle, he will seize whatever wave or current maintains him in power.

To no other audience but a fundamentally disillusioned one, could Yeltsin play the good cop/bad cop routine so often. Grandfather Yeltsin is forever being deceived by his feeble and lazy political offspring. Only a year ago, the two chief movers Anatoli Chubais and Boris Nemtsov, were swept into their positions as first deputy premiers, to turn the economy



round. A year later Yeltsin turns around and says they have failed. The government are almost to a man, formed of Yeltsin's people, carefully balanced to rival and unsettle each other. After three months of debate and four rounds of a budget was produced for this year, which the government may well have to senesne projections are ing this. Yeltsin's mass dismissal of his government is no more than a pre-emptive strike.

This chaos, this lack of pragmatic and effective government in Russia, the continuing collapse of the economy are in no one's interests, least of all Western Europe's. Only a strong Russian state has a chance of securing democratic reform. A weak one is a recipe for either disintegration or fascism.

But don't expect much

So does the outside world which has such a vested interest in Russia remaining stable. The question Yeltsin was asking yesterday was whether Mr. Yeltsin's return would be good or bad for reform. No one knows the answer but it is probably the wrong question to ask anyway. What Mr. Yeltsin has done will certainly have significance for the fortunes of Russia's ruling elites — the corporate clans headed by the Moscow barons — or boyars as they might have been called. But in a situation where it is unclear even whether ex-Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is up or

Mr Yeltsin's words might have some effect if they struck a popular chord with sufficient resonance to shame and intimidate the boyars and the mafia. The passive support of the Russian people for a strong man in the Kremlin survives adversity

The great oil fall

First count the global damage

Low oil prices are one of the factors behind falling inflation across the world — though reactions to the fall have shown sharp contrasts. In the United States a combination of market forces and fierce resistance to higher taxes has sent the price of gasoline down to below \$1 an American

What's missing from this process is a genuine link between taxation and the reduction of carbon emissions. Britain's high taxes on petrol historically have been mainly to raise revenue rather than to improve the climate while in the US petrol consumers pay nothing towards the environmental damage they cause. At the very least America ought to use higher imposts on gasoline to reduce tax elsewhere so the package becomes revenue neutral to taxpayers. If market forces are the only criterion then petrol prices won't rise significantly until world oil reserves have been seriously depleted and when damage to the environment may have become irreversible.

Ethics in schools

Reform should start at the top

A KEY government adviser goes to address a conference of secondary school head-teachers and talks about the need to ensure children not only achieve good academic standards but also a highly developed sense

The headteacher needs to learn a few philosophical facts. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury has recognised that moral education should not be confined to people with religious inclinations. The Greeks were searching for truth and goodness long before Christ was born. As Plato noted: if God approves of certain actions because they themselves are morally right, not that they are morally right because God approves of them, then God is logically dispensable. Schools alone cannot turn the tide. The family, media, peer group and religious leaders all play a part but schools still have a crucial role, even though children are only there for 15 per cent of their waking time. That still amounts to 15,000 hours. The first goal of every school should be an explicit statement of values. Value one, perhaps, should be learning to respect the opinions of others. Clearly one head needs reminding that the ethos of a school is as important as the formal curriculum. The blind rigid thinking he displayed over the weekend suggests reform had better start at the top.

Different standards

LAST WEEK'S budget gave a £2.50 rise in Income Support premium, over inflation, for under-11s from November. But I have heard no mention of the fact that you no longer get the higher over-11 rate when your child becomes 11, but only the September after the child's birthday. I need to use this extra (six months) money to buy secondary school uniform for my son. But I will not receive the extra few pounds a week until he has started secondary school in September.

S Williams,
Cardiff.

THE answer to Martin Jeeves' question (Letters, March 21) is 24,000 to 36,000 miles — given a typical 12,000 annual mileage, 30mpg and 10 year vehicle life. Of all the pollution generated during the life of a car, 20 to 30 per cent is during its production, before it even turns a wheel.

Dr J B Colam.
Kewswick,
Cumbria.

ing to make specific complaints for fear of further mistreatment. Others say that their complaints are not taken seriously, so it is a waste of time filling in a complaints form, and one prisoner reported seeing his form torn up.

Following an apparent increase in complaints by prisoners about their treatment in Wormwood Scrubs, I went there last August to meet John Jarvis, chairman of the

AS THE widow of a man who committed suicide while on remand at Wormwood Scrubs, I have been heartened to see that a group of prisoners have finally managed to bring to public attention the inhumane treatment that inmates have to endure behind those gates. I have also been heartily sickened by the failure of the prison service to suspend from duty those officers who have been named by

POA members know full well that an officer's word will always be taken against that of a prisoner and, failing that, they are assured that the POA membership will stand behind them should any action be

Despite injuries to 80 prisoners — and a Home Office inquiry finding prima facie evidence of assault — lack of corroborative evidence meant that no prison officers were prosecuted.

However, this did not stop the board of visitors from imposing some hefty penalties against the prisoners. Justice would be better served if boards of visitors were

workwood scrums, at least some of the victims will have been seen by the prison doctors. The histories and findings of doctors may well have suggested the cause of the injuries. Any enquiry must ask about the role of the prison medical service. There is a risk of conflicting interests with doctors having to decide whether to serve the patient or the prison authority.

Dr Joe Collier,
London.

Trouble at city hall: some can't get in, others can't wait to get out

It is clearly hypocritical for a party supporting local democracy to blatantly override when it comes to the selection of its own local government.

...n chambers, Martin Ziv
...the relentlessly hostile atti-
...de of councils and other pub-
...c agencies to childcare
...responsibilities,
...it remains illegal to pay
...cillors allowances to coun-
...cillors despite the fact that
...they are losing wages in order
...to serve the public. We don't
...need exhortations, we need en-
...forcing action by government.
...Mr Bob Cannell.
...City of Bradford Metropolitan
...District Council.

On Wormwood Scrubs, from the inside

The Government's indication that it intends to get rid of racism in the NHS (Black nurses' blues, March 18) is welcome. The need for specific action is now reaching crisis level.

One of the most substantial problems facing black staff, regardless of profession or grade, is in the area of their ghettoisation into the lowest level jobs. Just how sinister and manipulative this process can be became apparent in a case which a black midwife recently took to industrial tribunal.

With the backing of the Royal College of Midwives (RCM), she was able to successfully expose the extent to which her professional development had been undermined and nearly destroyed over a lengthy period.

Although her case has now been the subject of a landmark ruling of a land-mark, the NHS needs to do better than rely on individual members of staff to put the system right. A major overhaul of its recruitment and

promotional practices is well recognised, but the real test will be when monitoring and target setting become integral to these processes.


Kariene Davis,
General secretary, RCM,
London.

CAN someone please tell me why the 50th anniversary of the National Health Service will be celebrated in July 1996 when it began in January 1948?

I know this because my daughter, an NHS baby, was born on February 17, 1946, in a maternity ward situated in part of a workhouse in the village of Shardlow in Derbyshire.

Our family doctor, who had attended me through the pregnancy, was not allowed to see me through the birth, nor during the 6 weeks of confinement. All treatment and accommodation was basic, but free. I provided nightclothes and baby clothes.

F N Spencer,
Loughborough, Leics.



Nation of shopke

PEOPLE in Britain are being lulled into thinking a referendum on the single currency will enable them to stop it happening. But 11 European countries will introduce the euro on January 1, 1999, and British retailers will be expected to handle the pound and the euro, or either, by sending extra bill or spending less sums on new software and hardware for dual currency tills. They will also be expected to display dual price tickets and to have trained staff to give change in either currency.

WORSE!
— THEY
WANT
IT IN
EURDS.

Shoppers at ransom

We shopkeepers can either let the big stores that can afford to operate dual currency clean up, or go out of business through lack of sales, or overdo ourselves with extra costs to cope with dual currency — and still go out of business.

The Government's approach to the single currency has been described by some commentators as "accepting the euro through the back door." I don't, I call it blackmail.

Gordon Rogers,
Kingdon Upon Hull.

THE reply by Alan Lee Williams of the Transport and Water Association (Letters, March 25) to my letter (March 18) has missed the point. I have no doubts whatsoever about the Watermen having the requisite skills "to negotiate the treacherous tides, the shifting sands, the ever currents" of the tidal Thames.

My concern is that any monopoly represents a restriction of trade. We are constantly told that monopolies do not act in the public interest. Is Mr Williams seriously suggesting that it would be unsafe to let loose a person qualified to command a half-million-ton supertanker or a cruise liner on a Thames passenger-carrying vessel? He also did not tell us how long it takes to become a Waterman or to open the process of selection. I have a suspicion that it takes longer to learn to be a Thames Waterman than it does to learn to fly a Jumbo jet.

Roger Beckett.
Malden,
Essex.



Be sensible, have **£20**

The Alliance Current Account gives you £20 for joining.

We'll probably never know exactly why anyone would choose to dress up in a glee bird and jump off a pier. (And it's also never an Alliance Current Account, are much

WHEN so much moral nonsense is regurgitated in public halls, Fred Michael Barlow's reasoned sledding of religion in state schools is a moment of sanity (Schools adviser urges moral code to replace God, March 23). I would prefer people to treat me as a person, not because they love or fear some other creature of their imaginations which they call a god, nor because a nice thing so many people do is to tell themselves that, but because they will then respect me, either personally or as a fellow human being.

I am dreading the day when I will have to tell my child to listen to his teachers, except when they waffle on about a god.

—Sam Kean,
London

I AM surprised that I have never before heard of Michael Barber, as he must be an influential person indeed to be able to replace God.

Those who, unlike the Barber family, do not have the substance of God in the world will surely be surprised to see Christianity described as a "minority interest", rather like stamp collecting or train-spotting.

In a country in which less than one person in six recognises the millennium as a Christian celebration, should we not be trying to bring God back to the world rather than gradually but inexorably squeezing Him out and trying to replace Him with a secular and sterile code of ethics?

Sue Hodgson.
Peterborough.

THE problem with teaching children that morality springs from religious belief alone is that when, as their thinking matures and develops, many of them reject religious notions, such as the existence of a creative God, you are encouraging them to also reject morality.

Schools must accept that, for many people today, belief in God is a distant, if not impossible. Because of this we owe it to our children, and to society as a whole, to introduce moral and ethical ideas in schools free from the trappings of religion.

Dr. Barbara Geddes
Strat, Cheshire.

YOU report that Patrick Tobin, chairman of the Headmasters and Headmistresses' Association, has

presses' Conference, regards any form of citizenship education as on the road to new totalitarianism. This is very far from the truth. The "Modern Studies" has been long entrenched in Scotland, and is well taught in his own school. Modern Studies committees almost all that the Committee on the Teaching of Citizenship and Democracy in Schools, that will report on Thursday, will be rather boringly advocating. It is a respectable and widely representative committee, and I am glad to hear of it. On the RE issue we wisely say nothing and, unlike Prof Michael Barber, as chairman of that committee, will horses would not drag an opinion from me.

Prof Bernard Crick.
Edinburgh.

SO Prof Barber believes pupils should learn the ethics of "global citizenship" to replace crumbling religious values. "It's wrong to say that religious values he is thinking of. Perhaps 'You must love your neighbour as yourself' (Christian Gospels), 'Show kindness to the stranger who is as well as the neighbour who is a stranger' (Qur'an Surah 4), 'There can be no worship without performing good deeds' (Guru Granth Sahib 4). Such values are found in all religions and philosophies – such as charity in Christianity, *zakat* (alms-giving) in Islam, *tzedakah* (justice) in Judaism and *seva* (service for others) in Sikhism," Geoff Tecca.

Director, Westhill RE Centre, Birmingham.

possible service for their passengers. Would he now please explain how he reconciles this statement with the reality of a train on the Reading to Waterloo line¹ SWT is now running the slowest service on this route for 35 years and, to add to our discomfort, for all weekend and some late-evening services they have ceased using rolling stock with lavatories.

R David,
Wokingham,
Berksshire.

We do not publish letters where there is an e-mail address if supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters where there are more than 100 words to appear. The Country Diary can be found on Page 10

[illegible]

10 OBITUARIES

Fred Pooley

Building for Britain

FRED Pooley, who has died aged 81, rose from Cockney origins to become one of the pre-eminent local authority architects who spearheaded the postwar rebuilding of Britain. As Buckinghamshire county architect, he made the original layout for what was to become Milton Keynes. Later, at the Greater London Council, he bagged the railway authorities into creating Thameslink, one of the capital's few recent public transport success stories.

Pooley was the son of a West Ham holder. It was in the borough engineer's office there that he began work, while studying architecture by night at the Northern Polytechnic. From the stubborn stance of that little working-class municipal field, just beyond the London County Council's grasp, he learnt to cherish independence.

After the second world war, devastated West Ham needed to plan. Pooley rose to be deputy borough architect and planning officer before transferring to the even more shattered Coventry in 1950. There he served as deputy to the charismatic Donald Gibson and imbibed the new thinking about prefabrication, fast-track building and modern materials. He moved to Coventry's grand housing partnership with Wimpey, the climax of which was tall, concrete-clad blocks designed by Pooley for the centre of the Tile Hill neighbourhood, then

regarded as the *demerit* in housing production. When Pooley moved to Buckinghamshire as county architect in 1958, he was meant to convert a conservative authority to the new faith. Instead, he went native. Finding able, small builders, good brickworks, a population rising fast and a shortage of school places on his turf, he encouraged his architects to build simple, brick primary schools with pitched roofs. The method was called "rat-trail" — rationalised traditional construction.

The Ministry of Education's school-building moguls were furious at first, but left him alone when they found that Buckinghamshire's schools were cheap and durable. Pooley liked to wave a map at visitors showing how every other English county had been corralled into school-building "consortia". The term was Lord Hailsham's; Bucks alone had managed to resist.

Yet he still hankered after a grand gesture. This took the shape of "Fred's fort", a 12-storey, waisted tower, finished in 1968, which houses the Bucks county council offices at Aylesbury. It remains the town's principal landmark: a quaint, local response to the Torre Velasco at Milan.

In 1965-66, seeking to direct the growth of Bladderley, Pooley persuaded the council to back his north Bucks new city plan. This concept for 250,000 people was based on 24 miles of free

monorail, describing a loose figure of eight and focused on a megastructure, which would have made the centre of Cumbernauld look like small beer. High-density communities of the type now back in fashion were to cluster around the stations.

But local authority-inspired initiatives for new towns were consistently stamped upon by Dame Evelyn Sharp at the Ministry of Housing. So, under the Wilson govern-

ment, the "Pooleyville" plan was handed over to a development corporation and came under the influence of American libertarianism, which transformed the original plan into the utterly different — and ecologically incorrect — city of Milton Keynes.

By the time Pooley had become president of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1973-5, the local authority wave had passed its peak. It was a surprise, therefore, when, after his retirement from Buckinghamshire, he was induced in 1974 to join the GLC as controller of planning and transportation. The move was probably a mistake, but Pooley liked to sort out London's bloated planning bureaucracy. He knew times had changed and, in the event, contented himself with pragmatic aims — rationalising development control, clearing up the mess left after the debacle of the London motorway box and fostering a more thoughtful style of planning.

In due course, he was given architecture as well. But the GLC's predicament as a strategic authority, hamstrung by strong boroughs and changing hands at every election, had already become unenviable, and Pooley was unable to achieve much. It says a lot for his tenacity that he pushed the Thameslink plan into reality and pressed British Rail into re-opening the long-closed Snow Hill tunnel near Farringdon.

Pooley retired in 1980 to the Buckinghamshire home at Whiteleaf, outside Aylesbury, which he and his wife Hilma, whom he married in 1944, had never deserted, with a railway carriage in the garden. He was a genial man with a strong sense of common sense and a streak of definite candour.

He is survived by Hilma and their three daughters.

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Up for the cup... Scouler celebrates Newcastle's FA triumph over Manchester City in 1955

Jimmy Scouler

On wings of power

JIMMY Scouler, who has died aged 73, will be chiefly remembered as the classical type of Scottish wing half-back — a right half, powerful and relentless in the tackle, economical rather than inspired, in his steady use of the ball. In the days of the third-back game and W formation, it was the inside-forward, rather than the wing-half, who was expected to be inventive.

A Scot, born in Livingston, Scouler joined the Royal Navy during the last war. Portsmouth managers, who spotted him playing in local, naval games in Hampshire, persuaded him to join them as a professional in 1946. He proved a more than competent successor to another Scottish right-half, Jimmy Guthrie, who had captained Pompey to their surprising 4-1 win against Wolves at Wembley in the 1939 Cup Final.

Scouler became a dynamic figure in a famous half-back line consisting of himself, Reg Frewin, centre-half, and Jimmy Dickinson at left-half. Scouler and Dickinson complemented each other perfectly. If Scouler was the

tough nut who won the ball so fiercely and competitively, the more academic Dickinson was the elegant foil. Scouler got his first cap for Scotland against Denmark in October 1951, an honour many thought to be well overdue. The Scouler-Flewin-Dickinson middle line equipped Portsmouth with a backbone and a springboard, which enabled them to win the Football League Championship in some style for two consecutive seasons, 1948-49 and 1949-50. It looked as if they would win the FA Cup as well in 1949, when their opponents in the semi-final were second-division Leicester City, but on the day neither Scouler nor Dickinson could subdue the Wolves, and the inspiration of Leicester's attack, Portsmouth went down 3-1.

SCOUler did not miss any of Pompey's league games when they first won the championship, and when they retained it in 1950 on goal average, just ahead of Wolves, he missed only half a dozen. Significantly, he did not score a single goal in either campaign. That was not seen, in

those days, as being a half-back's job. From Portsmouth, he moved on to an Indian summer with Newcastle United, where he made up for the disappointment of 1949 by playing at Wembley in the FA Cup-winning team, which defeated Manchester City 3-1. Altogether he won nine caps for Scotland, though only one of them against England. On retiring, Scouler went into management with Cardiff City, where he did remarkably well with slender resources, not the least of his accomplishments being to stay in office for fully 10 years.

His greatest success was when he took the Second Division club all the way to the semi-final of the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1967/68, beating the powerful Torpedo Moscow in a play-off in the quarter finals, and forcing a draw away to the equally formidable SV Hamburg in the semi-final, before losing the return leg 3-2 at Ninian Park.

Brian Glenville
Jimmy Scouler, footballer, born January 11, 1925; died March 19, 1998

Birthdays

Air Chief Marshal Sir John Allison, C-in-C, RAF Strike Command, 55; Joyce Arram, secretary, Lib Dem Lawyers Association, 65; David Atkinson, Conservative MP, 58; Barbara Daly, make-up artist, 53; Robert Fox, theatrical producer, 46; Archie Gemmill, footballer, 51; Prof John Hedgecoe, photographer, 61; Sonia Lammiman, athlete, 42; Benjamin Luxon, baritone, 61; Patrick Malahide, actor, 53; Gene Nelson, dancer, actor and director, 78; Suzanne Norwood, circuit judge, 72; Dame Bridget Ogilvie, director, Wellcome Trust, 60; Herman Ouseley, chairman, Commission for Racial Equality, 53; Mary Pearce, molecular biologist, 56; Kathy Rinaldi, tennis player, 31; Dorothy Severin, Professor of Spanish, Liverpool University, 56; Maude Storey, former president, Royal College of Nursing, 68; Alan Sugar, entrepreneur of the home computer, 51; Philip Verling, secretary, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, 51; Prof Harry Whittington, geologist, 82.

Paul-Marc Henry

A hand across the world

ONLY hours before his sudden death at the age of 79, Paul-Marc Henry was dining with friends and giving them an account of Romania, where he had just been to advise on the country's economic problems. In retirement, this French diplomat was still travelling the world, still much sought after for his ability to grapple with development and environmental issues, and for his ability to inspire succeeding generations with new ideas for tackling contemporary problems.

He had risen from humble beginnings to join the small elite group of French diplomats, who carry the rank of "ambassadeur de France". A student of economic and political science, he obtained a doctorate in 1946 with a far-sighted thesis on "the structural revolution of the British economy" and, during

the early part of his long career, he served in London as secretary-general of the now defunct Anglo-French Commission for Technical Co-operation South of the Sahara.

In his last post, he served as French ambassador in Beirut. But the greater part of Henry's diplomatic career was spent in international organisations. He was deputy head of the UN Economic Development Programme in 1961; in 1971, he was UN under-secretary in charge of aid for East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), followed by a long stint in Paris as head of the OECD's Development Centre. He also became president of the International Society for Development.

As a student, I met Paul-Marc when he was first working in London. Later, when he was back in the Quai D'Orsay in charge of the French Foreign Ministry's Africa desk,

he became an invaluable source on the leadership of newly-emerging independent Africa. In New York, his home became a meeting place for diplomats, journalists, writers, artists and dog lovers. He and his American wife, Mary, had a much-loved black poodle that became the "author" of *Poodlestian* — a Paul-Marc book that was humorously illustrated by another regular visitor, Peter Ustinov.

It was while Paul-Marc was still in New York that he acquired a derelict farmhouse at Seguret, in Provence. It was scarcely habitable. But with the help of local builders, and his ageing father, the house was slowly restored. There were vineyards and enough land to plant a rose garden and have

a small pool. Paul-Marc, who was an inspired cook, liked to migrate around the property for meals. But the favourite, always, was that terrace where we would occasionally dance until all hours of the night.

After his divorce from Mary, Paul-Marc moved to a smaller house he had built on the property. There he surrounded himself with his books and his music and continued to hold court. But he continued to work and, during the last few years, spent much time on consultancy work in eastern Europe.

Paul-Marc Henry was married three times, and from his first marriage had a son, Jacques, and a daughter, Nicole.

Heila Pick
Paul-Marc Henry, diplomat, born October 9, 1918; died March 9, 1998



Flights of fancy... Corrin and his wife, Sara

Stephen Corrin

With children's hearts in mind

IN 1964, Stephen Corrin, who has died aged 83, wrote a delightful children's story, *The Fantastic Tale of the Plucky Sailor and the Passage Stamp*, beautifully illustrated by Edward Ardizzone, and published by Faber and Faber. Later, the publishers commissioned Corrin and his wife, Sara, to compile anthologies of children's stories. Thus started a remarkable collaboration.

The 18 anthologies, later published by Penguin's Puffin imprint, became bestsellers, selling more than a million copies. The Corrins ensured that the stories they selected would stimulate children's imaginations and widen their fantasies. Via titles like *Stories for Seven-Year-Olds* (1964), *A Time to Laugh* (1972) and *Favourite Fairy Tales*

(1988), they became household names the world over. With more illustrations by Ardizzone, Corrin also translated from Danish, Hans Andersen's *Fourteen Classic Tales* (1970).

The son of a shopkeeper, Corrin was one of 12 children born in Tredegar, South Wales, to a strictly orthodox Jewish family, which produced rabbis, a professor of psychology, and many people prominent in the Jewish community. He graduated in modern languages and Latin from University College, Cardiff, and in 1938 married the vivacious, 19-year-old Sara Heinstein. They opened a Jewish bookshop, the London Press, but it was not very successful. At the outbreak of the second world war, Corrin was called up to the Army, but

later ill-health — a lifelong problem — led to his discharge. He became a French and Latin teacher at Kilburn grammar school, in north-west London, where his pupils included the future historians Professors Jonathan Israel and Robert Wistrich, and the Financial Times economic commentator, Sir Samuel Brittan.

CORrin was a good linguist. Apart from his mother tongue, he translated from French Mircea Eliade's anthropological book, *The Forge and the Crucible*, and from Russian a children's book and a book on psychology. He reviewed for the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Guardian* and carried on an extensive correspondence on literature and philosophy

with writers and scholars such as Isaiah Berlin, Iris Murdoch, Wilfrid Beckerman and the socialist social historian, Raphael Samuel. Corrin enjoyed sharp, intellectual arguments, and was fond of quoting from the Talmud as from obscure French writers. Shy and reserved, often reticent, he had a quiet sense of humour, and enjoyed teasing people with acute puns and playfulness of language. He was, for his intimate friends, a delightful companion. He is survived by his wife, Sara, their two daughters and a younger brother.

Chimen Abramsky
Stephen Corrin (Samuel Aaron Cohen), writer, born August 26, 1914; died March 11, 1998

Lalita Pawar

DURING a career spanning 72 years, Lalita Pawar, who has died aged 79, worked in more than 700 films of the Hindi cinema. Her career began as a seven-year-old in the silent era and she made rapid progress, playing the lead in films like *Himmat Mardan* and *Nutaji Palkar*, becoming one of the most glamorous actresses of her times.

But then, in 1943, an accident led to facial paralysis and left her jobless for more than three years. Yet, as she once said, the facial distortion provided her with a longer lease of life in the film industry. It was when she shifted to character roles that Pawar became a household name in India. Whether it was as a mother, a squint-eyed, vampish mother-in-law, or a good-hearted matron, cinemagoers took her to their hearts. Sometimes she seemed more popular than even the film's hero and hero-

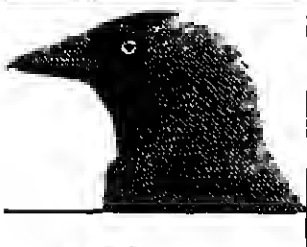
ine. She received the prestigious Filmfare award for best character actor for her role in Raj Kapoor's *Anari*.

Pawar's personal life was less successful. Her first marriage ended when her husband took a fancy to her younger sister. Pawar suggested to her husband, and treated their children as her own. Her second marriage to Rajprakash Gupta, of Bombay's Ambika Studio, gave her much-needed support.

Her film career was again interrupted in 1990 because of cancer of the jaw, but she made a comeback in 1997. Apart from Bombay movies, Pawar featured in Marathi productions. Her debut as a vamp was in a Marathi film and she played the vampish Manthara in the television serial *Ramayana*.

Haresh Pandya
Lalita Pawar, actress, born April 18, 1918; died February 23, 1998

Jackdaw



In fashion

THE past 10 years have seen a worrying development in [fashion] designers — very often male designers — whose role has traditionally been to create clothes which made ordinary women feel beautiful and therefore confident. Today's alternatives propose looks which no woman of sane mind would ever dream of wearing.

Women have been offered the choice of baring their breasts, exposing their buttocks, looking as if they have just been violated, appearing like they have escaped from

an asylum set up specifically to care for the victims of S & M, or posing as pre-pubescent children. Naturally, they have rejected such suggestions, but by doing so they have put themselves into a crisis situation — one which is increasingly reflected within the industry.

Who are women to trust to create images for them that are new and exciting, but are also actually capable of being worn? Do they smirk at the creations by young designers and imagine them to be nothing more than alarming manifestations of men behaving badly, or should they treat them as an insidious threat?

Fashion is a language. It can be correct, using standard punctuation, grammar and vocabulary — as couture always did in the past; or it can be slightly more laid back, as casual clothes have traditionally been, by breaking the rules and relaxing the conventions, or it can be obscene, full of foul mouthed references and unnecessary

shock tactics. The Tarantino school of fashion. *Colin McDowell talks fashion in Scene.*

Tokay is okay

TOKAY (the English name for the original tokaji wine) has always been peculiar. It is made from local grape varieties, notably furmint, grown on slopes overlooking the river Bodrog (in eastern Hungary). Late autumn weather often brought noble rot, the same fungus (*botrytis cinerea*) responsible for great vintages. The rotten grapes, called aszú, were harvested and pressed into a paste, then added to a base wine... and vinified as a conventional white wine.

Because the aszú grapes were rich in sugar, the wine re-fermented, resulting in a sweet wine with considerable alcohol and concentration. It was then aged for years in small casks in labyrinthine cellars beneath the vineyards. *Condé Nast Traveller* knocks back the Hungarian wine.

Suit set

BEING a Jamaican is not always easy. Wearing a suit while travelling to the south-west, I fell into conversation with a young lawyer of Nigerian and English parentage, who was going to Bristol to defend a client. We had a chat about rail privatisation, books, and inevitably, the weather. Disembarking, he said to me: "It's nice to meet a Jamaican, who's wearing a suit, who isn't a defendant."

I resisted the temptation to reply with some choice Jamaican expletives and settled instead for: "Oh, feisty hwoy." (Very roughly translated: Cheeky devil!). *Ferdinand Dennis in New Statesman.*

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail Jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; write Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Hannah Pool

A Country Diary

SOMERSET: Blackmore Vale was a great hunting forest long before, as Leyland records, it was cleared under William the Conqueror to become the gentle, pastoral vale of modern times. Settlements on the fringe of the forest — Henstridge, the ridge where stallions were kept, and Horsington, the tun of the horsekeepers or groom — supported the aristocratic pursuit of hunting, and lay close by the ancient track that ran from Salisbury to Sherborne. That track is now the A30 and, since the distant past, by Henstridge Ash, at the crossing that inspired a dismal poem by Hardy, and where now there is constant, busy traffic, there has been an inn. Nowadays, it is cheerfully devoted to eating and drinking, and much passing trade, but the leisure pursuits of the more static community, based on dairy farming 200 years ago, were not always so peaceful. The Western

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

ADRIAN Searle's review, Pages 10 and 11, G2, March 17, of the René Magritte exhibition in Brussels, had an unintended surrealistic quality due to the columns of type on Page 10 being placed in the wrong order. For a clearer idea of the review, read the columns on that page in the following order: 1, 2, 4, 3, 5. Apologies to Searle and his readers.

IN A REPORT headed, Le Pen's extremists gain and Gaullists lose in regional polls, we referred to the former defence minister of France, Philippe Léotard. We should have said François Léotard. Philippe, his brother, is an actor.

THE TROMBONIST in Dickie Bird's cultural life, Page 3, Friday Review, March 20, was George Chisholm, not Jen.

Death Notices

MERVIN. On Friday March 20th, William Mervin, 80 years, very much loved husband of Joan and loving father of Denise, Richard and Andrew. Funeral service at 11.30am, Wednesday March 25th, at St. Paul's Church, 25th March at 1.30pm. Donations to Friends of Countess, Montserrat. 0171 713 4474 or 0171 713 4120 between 3pm and 5pm Monday.

Anal
The
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Analysis The defence review

1500



Paul Foot:
Terror attacks
8

Your flexible foe

Labour has learned to love the military – if it's financially prudent, of course. That means sending in mobile forces only when a crisis erupts. By David Fairhall

THE collective groan that went up from the UK's armed forces when newly elected Labour announced "yet another defence review" could be heard a long way from Aldershot. Yet 11 months later, as final proposals are submitted for ministerial approval, the military has a good deal to be pleased about.

The fighting machine emerging from the Government's strategic defence review will certainly be smaller (although the Army should gain more manpower). But it will be far better adapted to a world in which UN peacekeeping, not cold-war confrontation, is the model. Although Labour's defence team would not like that comparison, it shares Lord Hurd's concern, when Foreign Secretary, that Britain should be "punching above her weight". This Government, in truth, is at least as eager as its Conservative predecessors to strut the international stage in combat kit. The Treasury may have something to say about that in the next few weeks.

This review is the third – and most successful – attempt to move our defensive forces forward from the static, dug-in strategies of the 1980s, when the West fortified itself against the threat from the East. Modern peacekeeping, by contrast, demands the rapid response and mobility of a fire brigade, with forces organised on a flexible tri-service basis.

This change has required a huge institutional shift. The first effort, the Options for Change review of 1991, was a first rough pruning. The 1994 Defence Costs Study seems in retrospect little more than a Treasury-driven exercise in managerial reform.

Now Labour, which before the election had little idea what a defence review would mean, has waded in, with widespread public consultation to bolster its credibility. Foreign-policy considerations have shaped much of the process – something the MoD hopes will make it less vulnerable to Treasury mutilation. The main foreign-policy change relates to the ending of the cold war, when all our Nato forces had to do was sit under their nuclear umbrella, waiting for a doomsday few believed would ever arrive. Now, by contrast, they recognise a real requirement to get up and go – to Bosnia, the Gulf or wherever – and remain in a hostile environment for years at a time. Military planning has acquired a new realism – which is why the Army will need 23,000 more troops to sustain operations.

The strategic defence

review, known as the SDR, looks 20 years ahead. In this context, the need to be "better adapted" means having the air transport and shipping to reach a destination in a hurry, and the supply chain to stay and fight. "We're looking at somewhat smaller forces," as one insider explains it, "but more deployable, and better supported."

It has generally been easier for the Army than the other two services to translate this broad concept into hardware, manpower and command structures. Throughout the cold war, the bulk of the British Army sat on the Rhine in Germany, preparing to defend its allocated section of the Nato line. This was known as "forward defence". For that the soldiers needed large numbers of tanks, to match those of the Soviet "shock" armies poised in the former East Germany.

A good deal of Nato's static defences have been dismantled since the Berlin Wall came down – including the British Army of the Rhine. One of the first questions for the SDR was whether Britain needed to keep even one tank division in Germany. How could such a second-world-war relic be justified now?

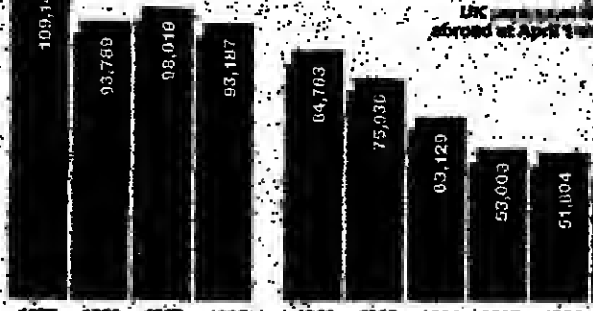
The answer is a mixture of money and politics. The 1st Armoured Division will remain because it has nowhere in Britain to live and train. Besides which Nato still values this contribution to its residual territorial defence. If the Brits were to leave, the Americans might follow; and with the possible exception of France, none of the Western allies wants that.

The Army's tank fleet can nevertheless be drastically cut. Only the 800 new Challenger 2 tanks will remain (a reduction of more than half), and less than a third of those will still be thundering round the German countryside.

The Army's main requirement from the review is six "deployable" armoured or mechanised brigades. This means two can be abroad on operations at the same time. One might still be in Bosnia, with another on short notice to move somewhere like the Gulf. They would be despatched and commanded, along with any naval or air forces on the same mission, from the tri-service Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), based deep inside a bunker at Northwood in north-west London.

At present, the Army has only five suitable brigades. It plans to re-equip the present airborne brigade to form a sixth, while transferring its three parachute battalions (though only two at a time) to the airmobile (helicopter)

Dwindling overseas garrisons



Out with the old

The cold war left our armed forces stationed in fixed positions. Planners want to move them to be ready to respond to a new range of threats. This is where people were based at April 1, 1997.

An example of their kit

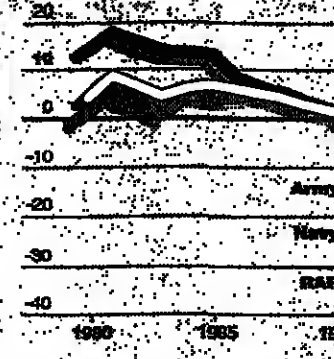
- Former Yugoslavia
- Foreign commitments can tie up resources. Take ex-Yugoslavia:
 - 1 augmented brigade HQ
 - 1 armoured regiment
 - 1 armoured infantry battalion
 - 1 armoured reconnaissance squadron
 - 2 artillery batteries
 - 1 light gun battery
 - 1 engineer regiment
 - National support and communications element
 - Jaguar, Hercules, Tristar, Sentry, Lynx, Gazelle, Chinook and Sea King aircraft (RAF complement, except helicopters, based in Italy)

Service	RAF	RAF	RAF
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853

Changing the guard

Forces of change

Percentage change in UK regular forces (excluding fixed 1990 levels)



In with the new

Modelling the new force structure (based on the 1997 review)

Service	RAF	RAF	RAF
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853
RAF	2,853	2,853	2,853

Changing the forces

Proposed forces under the current review

Navy	RAF	Army
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 large aircraft carriers equipped with Sea Harrier aircraft 35 destroyers and frigates 12 hunter-killer submarines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78 Tornado GR 59 Harrier GR7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 armoured/mechanised brigades 1 air mobile brigade 1 airborne brigade

The new model Army: designed to drop into overseas trouble-spots at short notice



brigade. In two years' time, this new "air manoeuvre brigade" will acquire powerful American-built Apache attack helicopters. This will become the Army's mobile spearhead (ministers may or may not restrict it to the "air cavalry" this week, depending on how many American war movies they have seen).

The old argument about whether the attack helicopter will eventually replace the main battle tank altogether has been neither ignored nor resolved. The Defence Secretary, George Robertson, for one, was convinced by his visits to Bosnia that even "peacekeeping" operations benefit from the tank's massive presence.

For the air force and the navy, rapid deployment to overseas trouble-spots has always been part of their stock-in-trade. The new demand is that they collaborate from the start on a tri-service basis, with contingency planning and operational command centralised in the PJHQ's Northwood bunker.

As far as naval and air force hardware is concerned, detailed future planning is bedevilled by technical and industrial uncertainties. Britain is committed on paper to buying 232 Eurofighter aircraft from 2002 onwards. How many we shall actually need, and when, depends among other things on whether the US successfully develops the Joint Strike Fighter, which the Royal Navy wants to replace the Sea Harrier, and which the RAF will probably take. For the time being the number 232 is politically sacrosanct – because it determines how much work British Aerospace receives from the \$40 billion Eurofighter programme.

The RAF is in a similar bind over its future transport fleet, the enhancement of which is a major declared aim of the SDR. Having ordered some updated Hercules tactical transport aircraft from the US, it has a choice of the European E-175 (which the UK is developing with France and Germany) or the American C-17. The UK is committed to supporting the European project, but few people in the MoD believe it will materialise; so leasing some C-17s is now a serious option.

The navy should get the two large 40,000-ton aircraft carriers it wants to replace its three small "Harrier carriers". The navy's amphibious forces, to put marines ashore in helicopters or landing craft, are secure in the form of two assault ships being built at Barrow-in-Furness.

That leaves the admirals relieved, but worrying how to make their bit of the SDR "cost-neutral", as required by their SDR brief. Can they make do with fewer than 35 destroyers and frigates, by abandoning regular patrols in the Falklands or the West Indies? Or if the Foreign Office objects to that, should they reduce the number of nuclear-powered submarines? These are questions to be thrashed out at this week's ministerial meetings.

The part of the review which would have exercised Old Labour most passionately – the future of the Trident nuclear deterrent – has made surprisingly few waves in Whitehall. The Government will honour its pre-election commitment to reduce Trident missile warhead numbers from the present maximum of 96 per cent to 480.

But it may not link the new total explicitly with the former Polaris system, as Labour planned to do in opposition, because the number on Polaris changed over the years from 48 to 32. MoD insiders promise that whatever happens, the structure of the deterrent force will be more "transparent". Meanwhile Trident's alert status has quietly been relaxed, without any announcement.

For now, the main battle to watch will be one between Whitehall departments for the resources to back up the review. But Labour, at least, has lost a reputation it may once have held among the upper echelons of the defence establishment. "Labour is good on defence," said a military source right in the thick of this week's Whitehall battleground. "I'd rather have a strategic defence review every five years than those maddening Treasury raids under the Tories."

Graphics sources: UK Defence Statistics 1997 (DASA/MoD); Ministry of Defence Performance Report 1996-7 (Stationary Office); background briefings; Graphics: Paddy Allen; Steve Villiers; Fisher Shesky; Research: Mark Espiner; David Fairhall is the Guardian's defence correspondent

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World Bank is urged to get not-so-poor to help rescue the worst off

Brown's plan for Third World

Alex Brummer
Financial Editor

BRTAIN is to propose a radical reform of the World Bank's lending policy under which the bigger developing countries will pay higher charges for their loans, with the extra income diverted to the globe's poorest nations.

Details of the UK proposal are expected to be unveiled by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, at next month's spring meetings of the World Bank/IMF in Washington and could well find its way on to the agenda for the Birmingham Group of Seven summit in May to be chaired by the

Prime Minister, Tony Blair. The G7 agenda will be tightly focused on the Asian crisis and Britain's efforts to combat debt and poverty in Africa.

To bolster preparations for the meeting, James Wolfensohn, and the IMF's managing director, Michel Camdessus, are to be invited to the preparatory finance ministers' session in London, which would normally only be attended by ministers and central bankers.

Preliminary work conducted by the UK, and discussed with the World Bank, suggests that by charging higher rates to bigger emerging market economies like China, India and Brazil, the

World Bank could generate greater income, which could be diverted to the poorer countries of Africa, Central America and the former Soviet Union, via the Bank's trust funds.

The extra cash would be particularly valuable in advancing the joint World Bank/IMF scheme to forgive the debt of the poorest nations of Africa by the millennium.

The model for the new "commercial" style loans to be made by the World Bank is seen as Korea.

As part of the global rescue operation for the country, the Bank mobilised \$3 billion (£1.8 million) of loans for economic stabilisation on December 23 last year. However, in a break with past practice,

the Bank charged an up-front fee of 3.5 per cent for its services, offsetting immediate income of £105 million.

It also doubled its normal interest charge on the loan to 1 per cent above the London inter-bank rate — twice its normal charge of a half point above the London market rate.

Even at these levels, however, the Korean loans were still relatively cheap compared to the interest rates of 2.25 per cent, 2.50 per cent and 2.75 per cent above the London rate charged by commercial banks when they rescheduled their debt.

The more commercial approach adopted — admittedly in difficult circumstances in Korea — is now being seen as a model for World Bank operations. Although Bank credits will still be cheaper and more reliable than those from commercial creditors, the higher charges could be used to generate extra income for the Bank.

This extra income can then be recycled to poor countries like Mozambique, where the international community is seeking to lift the burden of multilateral and bilateral debt.

The UK proposal is likely to be viewed sympathetically by the US, the Bank's largest shareholder. However, there may be less enthusiasm from Germany which until now has shown scant support for the efforts led by the UK to ease the debt burden of the

poorest countries. The UK move is likely to receive a helpful response from the president of the World Bank, who masterminded the highly indebted country initiative and has been anxious to introduce more commercialism to bank's operations.

This reflects Mr Wolfensohn's experience as an investment banker at Schroders in London and later at his own firm in New York.

The UK move is bound to be contentious among the World Bank's big customers, including China and India, which will have factored in cheaper borrowing costs. But since several of these countries run balance of payments surpluses, meeting the extra cost should not be a problem.

Notebook

More flutters than shudders



Edited by
Alex Brummer

THERE would have been a time when the sacking of the entire Russian government would have sent shudders through Moscow's fledgling financial markets.

Not these days, however. True enough, the rouble reacted nervously in early trading, a couple of bond issues might have to be modestly rescheduled, and the central bank cancelled the repo auction after getting just one bid. But even by mature market standards that hardly counts as meltdown; for an emerging market it could be classed as little more than routine volatility.

Reasons for such insouciance are not hard to find. Mr Yeltsin has pledged to keep to the path of economic reform. Indeed one ostensible reason for sacking long time loyalist Viktor Chernomyrdin, Anatoly Chubais, Boris Nemtsov and the rest was that they were not pushing ahead fast enough.

Then there was the small matter of the oil price. The recent slump has hit Russia as well as others. There has been talk that with the oil price on the floor Russian companies have been cutting down on exports. The post-Riyadh price spike should cool such mutterings.

Some Russia watchers argue that Mr Yeltsin's initiative is little more than one of his grand gestures. Many of those sacked — though presumably not Mr Chubais — could soon be back. A word of caution. Russia's economy may be recovering, or at least no longer contracting; its markets less inclined to be spooked. The reshuffle may have been a careful play. Then again it may not. Investors should be in no hurry to price western-style political stability fully into Russia's capital markets.

Parking push

TO Sir Donald Gosling and Ronald Hobson, the majority holders in National Parking Corporation — owner of NCP car parks and Green Flag — the arrival of the Americans in the shape of Cendant must seem like a godsend.

Since 1987, when the two founders of National Parking floated 25 per cent in the company to institutions, they have been looking at ways of turning their car parks into cash. Having flirted with flotation and then the break-up route (selling off Greco Flag) they have finally found a solution: the American way.

The offer by Cendant, which seems to be the ultimate virtual company since it franchises everything it can get its hands on, is a neat solution for the founders and

the new management of Bob Mackenzie, who has struggled to bring the benefits of data transmission to NCP — although users of the NCP franchise, including the state-of-the-art car park on Farrington Road opposite the Guardian's headquarters, could testify to systems which regularly melt down, causing the most horrendous car park jams.

Given the difficulty which the founders have had bringing the National Parking to the market, the 17 per cent premium, probably looks good enough. Moreover, Cendant will not doubt be using the NCP/Green Flag customer base to sell all manner of services, including no doubt financial products which the great growth seems to be in the UK. If, as expected, Cendant also uses London as a jump-off point to Europe, like the American investment banks, the NCP/Green Flag brands could become important job creators for the UK.

One fascinating aspect of all this is the team which has brought the deal to Cendant: Chase Manhattan and Merrill Lynch. These are two financial institutions which have recently been linked as possible merger partners. Deals like this demonstrate what they can do together including arranging takeovers, providing the finance and the distribution for any debt raised or refinanced after the transaction is done. This is exactly the kind of transaction which US investment banks have been doing for British utilities and explains why in the world of mega-bank, the UK is becoming an also-ran.

Telecoms task

If you were looking for someone to fill the shoes of Donald Cruickshank, Britain's respected telecoms regulator, NatWest Bank might not seem the first place to look.

Nevertheless, the appointment of David Edmonds, former managing director of group central services at the bank, is not as crazy as it looks. NatWest has been innovative in technological investment. Among other things, it was partly responsible for the development of the first smart card, Mondex, which has now been syndicated among a wide group of banks, and it also been innovative in developing personal computer, interactive and internet banking software. Indeed, this is an area where NatWest believes it can hammer home its retail banking advantage in the years ahead.

Not that this will help Mr Edmonds. He now plays on a much bigger canvas. As well as taming BT, which always feels it knows better than the regulators, Mr Edmonds needs to come to grips with the Cruickshank agenda. This includes allowing a proper market to develop in digital broadcasting without allowing Rupert Murdoch to dominate, and developing means to deal with the convergence between software/online providers such as Microsoft, telephony and cable.

Robinson company to pay him a £500,000 dividend

Don Atkinson

PAYMASTER General to reap dividends worth more than half a million pounds from his holdings in TransTec, the specialist engineering company he founded. The offshore trust of which Mr Robinson and his family are beneficiaries could receive a further £185,000.

The payout follows TransTec's figures for 1997 released yesterday showing pre-tax profits of £1.7 million and a final dividend of 1.85p per share.

Mr Robinson holds about 15 per cent of TransTec, giving him about 28 million shares. These alone would entitle him to £500,000 in dividends, on top of the half-year dividend payment of about £238,000.

Market reaction to TransTec's results lifted the shares

5p to 82½p, boosting the value of Mr Robinson's holding from £21.1m to £23 million.

Mr Robinson's personal stake has been placed in a blind trust over which he has no control, as required by the rules governing ministers' interests. On top of his personal stake are the 10 million shares acquired in August 1995 by Starbell, a company associated with him, which went on to sell them to the Orion Trust, the Channel Islands trust.

Mr Robinson and his family are discretionary beneficiaries of the trust, which was set up in 1996 at the wish of Belgian businessman Josua Bourgeois. Because Mr Bourgeois was never a British taxpayer, the trust has been free of tax income and capital gains.

Given Mr Robinson's role in driving against tax-avoidance, he was vulnerable to attack.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.445	Germany 2.977	Malaysia 6.46	Singapore 2.85
Austria 20.95	Greece 528.85	Mexico 0.945	South Africa 3.98
Belgium 51.57	Hong Kong 12.56	Netherlands 3.344	Spain 250.98
Canada 2.203	India 66.78	New Zealand 2.88	Sweden 14.04
Cyprus 1.27	Ireland 1.185	Norway 12.34	Switzerland 2.43
Denmark 11.47	Finland 9.142	Portugal 304.16	Turkey 382.510
France 9.955	Italy 2.953	Saudi Arabia 8.15	USA 1.851

Supplied by NatWest (excluding rupee, shilling and milled)

Reuters expands underground



Bank of information... Reuters managing director Julie Holland unveils the news service being offered to the 44,000 London commuters using Bank station. PHOTOGRAPH: REUTERS

City commuters take a step nearer the mobile office

News screens offer Tube travellers opportunity to surface fully primed

Simon Beavis
Media Business Editor

IT WOULD be misleading to describe it as the information superhighway, although some news-hungry types in the City might view it as being just as indispensable.

Welcome to the Information Trav-o-lator. From yesterday morning, bankers and brokers hurrying

through Bank underground station to spend a long day behind the City's dealing room screens were treated to an important new service. The chance to log on early and arrive at the desk totally primed.

Reuters have erected eight screens along the link between the Waterloo and City line and Bank, giving City commuters the news and sport as it happens.

Up-to-date prices, the

very latest headlines, important developments in the bond markets — all there to be consumed as you trundle by on the moving pavement.

Punters merely step on to the trav-o-lator — no need even to read and walk at the same time — and just take in the latest information. It could make all the difference.

There will never again be an adequate excuse for arriving for a day of toil in the money markets and exchanges underinformed.

Take the headlines at 3.30 yesterday afternoon.

"Dahmer-Benz not interested in buying Rolls-Royce from Vickers," read one headline. Unfortunately the screen does not have the time or space to include any of the other things Dahmer-Benz is not interested in doing because it's on to the next headline. "Clinton preaches democracy, trade and justice on African tour." Our specialist in commodities (Africa) would be grateful for that.

Julie Holland, managing director of Reuters UK and Ireland, said the service would provide the 44,000 passengers with more

recent news than their morning papers. "As the headlines scroll through at a rate of one every six seconds, commuters will have been brought up to date on real-time news from around the world by the time they get to their desks," she said.

Ultimately this nice if rather expensive boarding provides Reuters with a handy way to promote itself as the leading news and information agency. That is particularly useful when rivals, such as Bloomberg, are aggressively trying to steal the limelight.



NCP's new chief seeks dividend from loyal parkers

TONY MAY and DAVID GOW examine the business plan behind Cendant takeover

AERICAN car-hire and hotels group Cendant is planning to use its \$801 million purchase of National Parking Corporation as a springboard for expansion across Britain and the Continent.

The \$30 billion (£18 billion) company wants to take over the running of hundreds of British local authority car parks. Cendant intends to bring in a loyalty-card scheme offering extra services to the seven million customers who use NCP parking garages and Green Flag emergency rescue service.

While the NCP subsidiary dominates British private car parks, it still claims only 10 or 12 per cent of the total number of parking spaces, of which 80 per cent are controlled by local authorities. Chief executive Bob Mackenzie, aged 44, who has revitalised the car parking group operator, wants to take over running of these sites, in exchange for investment.

He believes that most car owners would rather use a staffed, well-lit car park, protected by closed circuit television instead of leaving a pay-and-display ticket to tell a

thief that the car will be there for two more hours.

Mr Mackenzie also plans to offer car parking customers extra services, ranging from a tyre check to full car servicing and valeting.

Cendant is best known for its Avis, Ramada Inns, Howard Johnson and Travelodge franchised brands and sold one in four US homes last year. It offers the 66 million holders of its petrol and company cards access to shopping, travel, car, and other services.

Stephen Holmes, vice chairman of Cendant, said the company wants to treat regular NCP users as an airline might treat its regular customers, offering them loyalty benefits and the range of Cendant ser-

vices. "NCP and Green Flag customers have not been treated to a loyalty customer service," he said, adding that the company "hasn't had the service mentality we think we can bring to bear."

NCP, which made a profit of £26.1 million in the half year to September 30 on sales of £183.3 million, has a net asset value of £287.7 million.

Since his arrival three years ago, Mr Mackenzie has doubled the value of the company and invested heavily in computer systems and security. He found that while founders Ronald Hobson and Sir Donald Gosling were brilliant at finding sites, their management skills were lacking.

Daily cash collection

receipts from 500 car parks across Britain were filled in by hand. By the time the records were eventually received at head office they were being reconciled with cash in the bank two months in arrears.

"There was little computerisation and the group did not know who its biggest customers were. Although it was highly profitable, it missed business opportunities."

The group's market is expanding as the number of cars in the UK is forecast to increase by 10 million — or 50 per cent — by 2005. Mr Mackenzie wants the company to be a highly profitable part of the solution to the problem of congestion on roads and in urban centres that the Gov-

ernment's forthcoming transport White Paper is due to address.

Mr Mackenzie agrees that car use must be restricted if city pollution levels are to be cut but argues that on-street parking is the main culprit and that car parks enable traffic to move freely. He wants to see computer-linked signs at town boundaries and on motorways showing where car parks are and how full they are.

At the same time as the NCP deal, Cendant yesterday agreed to buy Miami-based American Bankers Insurance Group for \$3.1 billion in cash and stock. Cendant will become the largest US seller of insurance through banks, retailers and third parties.

The Guardian
Golf
Els in good health after Tamil Tiger
David Davies

Handwritten signature or mark.

Golf

Els in good health after taming Tiger

David Davies finds no talk of revenge as Bay Hill win makes up for Thai hiccup

ERINIE ELS accepts the inevitability of it all. "There's going to be rivalry, I suppose," he concedes. "Probably a lot more now, because you guys are going to be writing about this, and about Thailand. I never had revenge in my mind. I don't want to talk about revenge or that kind of thing, because I was not thinking about that out there today."

But if revenge is a dish best eaten cold there was a cool, clinical quality about the way the South African not only won the Bay Hill Invitational on Sunday but, in doing so, dismissed the man who had taken him from a Thai tournament he knew he should have won.

Eight weeks ago Els allowed Tiger Woods to make up 11 shots on him over the last 36 holes of the Johnnie Walker Classic at the Blue Canyon Club in Phuket. That superior play-off, which the American won and in the process devastated Els, left him, playing 36 holes on Sunday because of rain interruptions over the first two days, and playing them with Woods, proved 12 shots better than his rival and beat him by 10.



Millionaires' row... Ernie Els, right, rests his weary feet three holes from home with Davis Love III and Tiger Woods for company

Els produced rounds of 65 and 73 for a 14-under-par total of 238 compared to the 73 and 77 that Woods managed for 284. Els beat Jeff Maggert and Bob Estes by four and Bernhard Langer, the leading European, by five. Colin Montgomerie three-putted the last for a seven-under 281 to finish joint eighth and earn \$80,000 (\$26,000) compared with the German's \$88,000 and Els's \$360,000.

Lee Westwood from Work-sop rather spoiled his chances of a high finish with a triple bogey at the 3rd and then a double bogey at the last. But, on a difficult day, he did not lose as much ground as he

might have done and, with a total of 294 for four under, he finished joint 13th with Woods and Davis Love III and won \$88,400.

Els has had a wonderful start to the year, having played in nine tournaments and finishing third on four occasions, second once and winning twice. He had a 10th-place finish in the Mercedes event and last week missed the cut in the Honda Classic. The last time he missed a cut in the United States was at the 1997 Kemper Open, the week before he went on to win the US Open.

The Bay Hill event was his 80th tournament in the US

since he joined the Tour in 1994 and his winnings from Orlando moved him over the \$4 million mark, an average of \$50,000 per event. His win on Sunday was the fifth year in succession he has triumphed in the US and only Greg Norman and Phil Mickelson, with six, can boast better records.

Els admitted afterwards that, through the word "Tiger" and never passed his lips all day, "you still have thoughts going through your mind. After all, for the final round I had a five-shot lead over Leonard, Phil Mickelson, Tiger and in Thailand it was eight. But this time it was 10 better that way. You can see what's going on and know what you have to do."

And I have to say this really feels good. I played with two of the best players in the world today, Tiger and Davis Love III, and to beat them by such a margin is really a good feeling.

"I know you guys are going to write up a rivalry between Tiger and I, but that's probably good for golf, but really it's not just me and Tiger. There's so many at the moment. It's Davis, it's Justin Leonard, Phil Mickelson, David Duval, and golf is really healthy at the moment. Els is healthier too. He has

engaged a personal fitness trainer, lost half a stone and said he felt the benefit over Sunday's long haul. "But," he added, "I think tonight I might have the night off."

Sweden's Liselotte Neumann sank a birdie putt on the third play-off hole to beat Rocco Jones and take the winner's cheque for \$77,914 in the LPGA Standard Register Classic in Phoenix, her first title this year but the 11th of her LPGA Tour career.

Britain's Laura Davies relinquished her grip on the title she had won the previous year with a final-round 69 to finish six shots adrift of the leaders on 268.

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Racing

Lincoln gets full treatment with new draw

Non Cox

SANDWICHED between the Cheltenham Festival and Aintree, and coming on the back of a winter of all-weather flat racing, the traditional start to the flat turf season at Doncaster on Thursday is fast getting lost in the logjam of fixtures.

In an attempt to drum up interest in Saturday's Worthington Lincoln Handicap, for which 69 horses stood their ground yesterday, the Doncaster executive have organised a "celebrity draw."

After attending the Oscars ceremony in Los Angeles, Steve Elton, one of the stars of The Full Monty, will be at Doncaster on Thursday to conduct the public draw, which allows connections to choose a stall for their Lincoln runner, in an order determined by ballot.

The effect of the draw over Doncaster's straight mile is debatable nowadays, but ground conditions will play an important part in the outcome.

Michael Ball has stated he would not be happy to run Solar Storm, 10-1 joint favourite with Right Wing in Ladbrokes' betting, should the ground ride too fast.

However, a rare international favour is added to this year's race with the French-trained Punishment an expected runner with Gerard Mosse aboard.

The seven-year-old's English-born trainer John Hammond said: "All being well he will run. His owner, Tony Richards mentioned the idea of the Lincoln six or eight weeks ago and I was very much in agreement."

"Punishment ran well to finish second in quite a nice conditions race at Malton. Laffine and that looked like a

decent first run of the season."

Punishment, a 20-1 chance with Ladbrokes, finished four lengths ahead of Witching Hour last time and it will be interesting to see how Julie Cecil's filly performs in the Doncaster Mile on Thursday.

Alamein, sixth behind Kuala Lipis last year when trained by Willie Haggas, proved his well-being when winning comfortably on his first start for David Nicholls at Southwell yesterday.

"He is in the Lincoln but needs a dozen or more of those shove him in the weights to come out if he is to get a run, so he will probably end up in the Spring Mile on Friday," said Nicholls, who has such a good record with other trainers' cast-offs.

Looking ahead to the Martell Grand National, reports that Young Hustler had been ruled out of the race and might even be retired were strenuously denied by the 11-year-old's trainer Nigel Twiss-Davies yesterday.

"He's not been retired. There is a chance he might miss the National but the vet hasn't even seen him yet," declared the trainer. "Young Hustler has an enlarged joint and we have got to scan him tomorrow to see whether he will be able to run."

Two other favourites on the mark with Flagjack Lad (3.30) at Cheltenham today, but the interesting one on this card is Oriental Boy (2.30).

A lightly-raced six-year-old trained by Richard Lee, whose fortunes have taken a turn for the better this season, Oriental Boy has shown only a glimmer of ability over fences but he gets into this lowly novice handicap on a plater's mark. Both on looks and pedigree, he should be capable of better than he has shown so far.

Uttosteter Jackpot card with guide to the form

RON COX	TOP FORM
2.20	Charlie Ching
2.30	Dark Day
2.40	Shamrock
2.50	Swilly
3.00	The Cockatrice
3.10	Test Day

Left-handed out track of 114m with 170yds run-in. Easy bends and only a few undulations. Good, good to firm in places. Long distance travellers: Eddi Dwyer (2.50) & Charlie Ching (2.50). James Adams, Rancors, 23m miles. Several days following: Rancors, 23m miles. Estimated time: 2.20 (2.20) 2.30 (2.30) 2.40 (2.40) 2.50 (2.50) 3.00 (3.00) 3.10 (3.10) 3.20 (3.20) 3.30 (3.30) 3.40 (3.40) 3.50 (3.50) 4.00 (4.00) 4.10 (4.10) 4.20 (4.20) 4.30 (4.30) 4.40 (4.40) 4.50 (4.50) 5.00 (5.00) 5.10 (5.10) 5.20 (5.20) 5.30 (5.30) 5.40 (5.40) 5.50 (5.50) 6.00 (6.00) 6.10 (6.10) 6.20 (6.20) 6.30 (6.30) 6.40 (6.40) 6.50 (6.50) 7.00 (7.00) 7.10 (7.10) 7.20 (7.20) 7.30 (7.30) 7.40 (7.40) 7.50 (7.50) 8.00 (8.00) 8.10 (8.10) 8.20 (8.20) 8.30 (8.30) 8.40 (8.40) 8.50 (8.50) 9.00 (9.00) 9.10 (9.10) 9.20 (9.20) 9.30 (9.30) 9.40 (9.40) 9.50 (9.50) 10.00 (10.00) 10.10 (10.10) 10.20 (10.20) 10.30 (10.30) 10.40 (10.40) 10.50 (10.50) 11.00 (11.00) 11.10 (11.10) 11.20 (11.20) 11.30 (11.30) 11.40 (11.40) 11.50 (11.50) 12.00 (12.00) 12.10 (12.10) 12.20 (12.20) 12.30 (12.30) 12.40 (12.40) 12.50 (12.50) 13.00 (13.00) 13.10 (13.10) 13.20 (13.20) 13.30 (13.30) 13.40 (13.40) 13.50 (13.50) 14.00 (14.00) 14.10 (14.10) 14.20 (14.20) 14.30 (14.30) 14.40 (14.40) 14.50 (14.50) 15.00 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14 SPORTS NEWS

Football

French face huge fine in tickets row

Jon Henley in Paris and John Duncan

THE World Cup organising committee today faces legal action from the European Commission over its refusal to make more than 10,000 tickets available exclusively outside France. The action could lead to a multi-million-pound fine of up to a 10 per cent of the tournament's revenue.

The EC said it would immediately initiate formal proceedings against the organising committee (CFO) for releasing only 50,000 of the 160,772 tickets still to be allocated. They will be offered on a first-come-first-served basis, the CFO said. However, that will favour domestic buyers.

"They called us to say that they could not agree to make the tickets available to non-French residents only," a Commission spokesman said. "This is not good enough."

England supporters have been allocated little more than 9,000 tickets in total for their three group matches.

The Commission first complained last month about the sale of the 2½ million tickets that had already been sold in France, and last week insisted at a meeting with organisers that the remainder be sold exclusively outside France.

"The CFO is willing to allow all supporters from Europe to have access to these tickets," a spokesman said. "But it refuses to accept that the French public should be excluded from buying these tickets."

He added that they will be sold directly to the public via a telephone hotline with 60 multilingual operators. Buyers

will no longer need a French address, payment can be made in currencies other than the franc, and the hotline number is to be advertised overseas and on the World Cup website.

France was told that the Commission considered the allocation policy unfair because it gave French citizens better access to tickets than citizens of other EC countries, which is against EC competition policy.

The Commission gave France two weeks to come up with a formula for selling the extra tickets to foreign fans to redress the balance. The refusal may be partly due to "political pressures", according to a spokesman. That is thought to refer to the fact that French taxpayers stumped up a third of the bill to renovate the stadiums.

The sports minister Tony Banks, who flew out to South America last night to boost England's 2006 campaign to host the tournament, said that though France is in a difficult position, lessons must be learnt. "It has to be remembered by future organisers that when you offer to host the World Cup it is on behalf of the rest of the world not your own behalf," he said. "You have to be sure to be as generous to your guests as you are to yourselves."

The Football Association is keen not to appear to be sniping at the organisers so close to the tournament and with its 2006 bid in the pipeline. "We are not going to get involved in the politics of the European Commission," said David Davies, the FA director of communications. "Our priority is to get the last possible ticket for our English supporters and we are not interested in the politics."

Curcic wedding fillip for Palace

SASA CURCIC, Aston Villa's unsettled Yugoslav midfielder, may be given the chance to salvage his career with Crystal Palace after marrying an English woman.

Curcic, a £1 million target for Palace, faced the prospect of being denied another work permit because he has not played enough games for Villa, but he brought forward his wedding to last Tuesday and has averted the threat of being deported.

Curcic has until 5pm on Thursday, transfer deadline day, to leave Villa Park. Although Palace is his most likely destination, Fulham are also said to be interested in him. "I would be very happy to play for Palace but until I've signed I can't take anything for all granted," he said.

Rami Garde looks likely to leave Arsenal at the end of the season and return to his former club Lyons. The 31-year-old French utility player has been at Highbury for two seasons after joining on a free transfer from Strasbourg, but is now hoping to return to the club where he was captain.

He is out of contract in the summer and has had preliminary talks with Lyons. "They have spoken to me and left the door open for a return," said Garde, who has been a fringe member of the side but has been involved in Arsenal's FA Cup run.

Sir Jack Hayward, president and chairman of Wolves, Arsenal's semi-final opponents, is out of hospital and increasingly optimistic about being at Villa Park to see the sides meet on Sunday week. "We were always recuperating in Los Angeles after having a triple heart bypass operation last week."

Wafford, the stuttering Second Division leader, have extended the striker Dominic Foyles loan from Wolves until the end of the season. "The Republic of Ireland Under-21 international has been with the Hornets since the beginning of March."

Burley being unavailable is one of disappointment but cometh the hour, cometh the man. Brown said. "The Celtic striker Darren Jackson will start the match, possibly partnering Scott Booth, the former Aberdeen player who is on loan to Utrecht from Borussia Dortmund. Brown will decide today whether the goalkeeper Jim Leighton, Tom Boyd or Colin Hendry will be awarded the captaincy."

The Danish squad includes Brian Laudrup, of Rangers, and Celtic's Marc Rieper and Morten Wieghorst.

Team talk

The independent news and reports service

0930 16 86 +

Arsenal	60	Everton	73	QPR	88
Aston Villa	61	Hudd. Town	74	Rangers	87
Barnsley	62	Ipswich Town	75	Sheffield United	88
Birmingham	63	Leeds United	76	Sheffield Wed.	89
Blackburn	64	Leicester City	77	Southampton	90
Bolton	65	Liverpool	78	Spurs	91
Brentford	66	Man. City	79	Stoke City	92
Burnley	67	Man. United	80	Sunderland	93
Celtic	68	Millwall	81	West Ham	94
Chelsea	69	Midweek	82	Wimbledon	95
Coventry City	70	Newcastle Utd	83	Wolves	96
Crystal Palace	71	Norwich City	84		
Derby County	72	Nottingham Forest	85		

CALLS COST 50P PER MIN AT ALL TIMES. SUPPLIED BY: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

The Guardian INTERACTIVE



Keep smiling through... Lawrie McMenemy, right, and his coach Joe Jordan find some amusement during training in Belfast

Big Mac covers troubles with relish

Michael Walker finds Lawrie McMenemy trying to build bridges at Stormont as his Northern Ireland squad collapses around him

MONDAY morning, Stormont buildings, Belfast: McMenemy requires more than a little help to get his head around the situation. He is out of control in the summer, although when I asked if there had been a game on it on Saturday I was told "no". But they didn't tell me there had been one on Friday night. So I'm getting to know the locals a little bit.

When the reporters' next four words were "it's about the state...", even "Big" that people don't like to talk about here.

Suddenly his colleagues' eyes widened and their chests tightened — asking political questions 200 yards away was fine, but with the Northern Ireland football team politics are always left outside the dressing-room door.

There was "Big" Gerry Adams, of course, leading the team in a delegation, and "Big" Ian Paisley carrying a poster that read "Bloody and deceitful men will not live out their days". But there was at least one new and nearly fresh-faced kid on Ulster's chopping block, "Big" Lawrie McMenemy.

At 61, "Big Mac", as he has been christened in a doomed attempt to mirror the "Big Jack" Charlton aura, is a bit old to be taking up new challenges, but here he was in Stormont's civil servants' offices, looking at the Northern Ireland question.

It is six weeks since McMenemy became the extremely surprising replacement for Bryan Hamilton as the North's manager, and tomorrow night at Windsor

clashes that greeted his appointment. McMenemy is the first non-Ulsterman in the job, and it has been noted.

There was, however, one magic moment when it seemed that all was well about to be broken as the always unmentioned political-religious agenda appeared to loom on the horizon.

"Can I ask you a question," said a journalist from one of Belfast's morning papers. "It's in relation to a situation

backgrounds," he said. "If you built a bridge from here across the water you would finish up in Newcastle." Gillespie shifted awkwardly.

One man who will not be meeting the locals, though, is Dele Adebola, the Nigerian Scouser from Birmingham City called into the squad by McMenemy. Adebola has been suffering "back spasms" since Saturday and failed to join his new squad of pals in Belfast on Sunday night.

and having called Steve Morrow "Jeff", McMenemy then showed that he had done a little homework by informing the questioners that the pitch was poor because it was 30 years old.

"I've been told it will be done in the summer, although when I asked if there had been a game on it on Saturday I was told 'no'. But they didn't tell me there had been one on Friday night. So I'm getting to know the locals a little bit."

That task should be straightforward, according to McMenemy. "We're from similar

McMenemy insists Adebola is still keen to play for Northern Ireland, but the player was watched during the match against Nottingham Forest on Saturday by Nigeria's new Ambassador for Sport, John Fashanu, and that seems significant.

Ipswich Town's Jamaican-born David Johnson was not at Stormont yesterday either, and with eight other potential starters out injured McMenemy is beginning to realise why his predecessors have had to deal with a lack of numbers.

Northern Ireland was only one of their World Cup qualifiers — they are 98th in Fifa's ratings; Slovakia are 85th — so there is also a lack of quality, a fact McMenemy has already encountered.

"I'm scouting very rarely in the Premiership because I know the lads we've got there," he admitted. "Joe Jordan [McMenemy's assistant] and me are going into the First and Second Divisions now. I don't bump into Glenn Hoddle very often, I can tell you that."

No, McMenemy has new acquaintances now, but was, in Mo Mowlam's description of her situation, "stubbornly optimistic". If only the locals were.

The situation at Chester is so acute that it is by no means certain they will be able to fulfil Saturday's League fixture at Swansea City. "We are working assiduously to try and resolve this matter," said a club spokesman yesterday.

Chester's fate rests in the hands of their chairman Mark Gutterman, who purchased a 99 per cent shareholding in the club for a nominal fee three years ago.

Gutterman, a local property developer, was unavailable for comment yesterday.

The Football League said that it was closely monitoring the situation. "We are keeping an eye out for any developments at Chester but, so far, they have made no contact with us," a spokesman said.

A senior Chester official will this morning try to arrange a meeting with the Professional Footballers' Association in the hope of receiving financial assistance, advice and reassurances.

Falkirk's hopes of surviving a financial crisis appeared to lift yesterday after a local MP met the club's provisional liquidator.

Falkirk, who are second in the Scottish First Division and in the semi-finals of the Scottish Cup, have debts believed to total £1.5million and need a buyer if they are not to fold.

The Inland Revenue is owed £400,000 and it is estimated that the debts could be rising by around £30,000 a month.

Dennis Canavan, the Labour MP for Falkirk West, said after the meeting that he was "reasonably hopeful of a rescue operation".

"Now the club has gone into liquidation there is more chance of a developer coming in for the ground, and a different buyer for the club," he said. "I got the impression the Inland Revenue are not demanding their money tomorrow. They want to be paid, but they are being patient."

Results

Golf

RAY HILL INVITATIONAL (Orkney, Fri): Paul Hume (S) 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459,

SportsGuardian

England backs to the wall

West Indies v England: sixth Test, fourth day

Atherton heads for the exit

Mike Selvey in St John's

ENOUGH has happened in this series for it to be clear that in this game nothing is certain. But all the indications at the Recreation Ground here yesterday were that the Mike Atherton era is coming to an end.

He took over the England captaincy from Graham Gooch 4½ years ago. Now, 52 Tests on, England are battling to avoid their third defeat of what in reality has been a close series and the chances are that the side will have a

Scoreboard

ENGLAND: First innings 127 (Ambrose 3-23, Ramprasad 4-29)
WEST INDIES: First innings (see yesterday, 401-4)
 R C Holder 2 & D Caithley 45
 C L Hooper not out 100
 J R Murray & M Hussain to Headley 4
 F A Rose bow to Caithley 2
 C E L Ambrose not out 18
 Extras (lb14, nb10) 62
 Total (for 3, 66.2 overs) 800

ENGLAND: Second innings
 M A Atherton bow to Ambrose 13
 A J Stewart & Wallace to Hooper 73
 M A Butcher & Murray to Ambrose 80
 W Hussain not out 14
 G P Thorpe not out 14
 Extras (nb2, nd5, lb2) 165
 Total (for 3, 66.2 overs) 127
 To bat: M R Ramprasad, R C Russell, O W Hooper, A R Caithley, A R Fraser, P C Taniell
 To bowl: S A Bucknor and G J Mitchell

new leader by the time South Africa arrive for the summer. Set to score 373 to avoid an innings defeat after Brian Lara had declared the West Indies innings closed after little more than an hour's play at 500 for seven, a monumental effort of concentration, application and technique would be required from the England batsmen if they were to survive 74 overs plus a full day's play today.

This is a situation in which England so often call on Atherton, the bloody-minded, stubborn batsman whose centuries rarely carry them to victory but almost without exception make sure they do not lose. His unbeaten 188 completed in Johannesburg over 11 hours of toil remains a benchmark for defiance in any age. Not here, though.

Atherton, on his 30th birthday, made only 13 before he fell victim to Curtly Ambrose for the 15th and almost certainly last time in the 41 innings that they have faced one another.

Instead it was Alec Stewart, the leading contender among a slender group of Atherton's heirs apparent, who puffed up



Down and out... Michael Atherton turns his back on West Indian celebrations at his departure, leg before to Curtly Ambrose for 13

his Surrey chest and rattled off his defiance, taking the attack to the home bowlers. Timing the ball sweetly, he hit nine boundaries — driven, cut and pulled with panache from pace and spinners alike — before he was caught at short leg off bat and pad for 78 flicking at Carl Hooper.

It left England wallowing at 165 for three — Mark Butcher earlier having completed a pair to become Ambrose's 30th wicket of the series — with Nasser Hussain (50) and Graham Thorpe (14) trying to take the game into the final day.

Until his dismissal scarcely anything unsettled Stewart, his composure leaving him only once, shortly before tea,

when, on 72, he drove loosely at Dinanath Ramnarine's leg spin and mistimed the shot to deepish mid-off, where Ambrose misjudged the chance, pushing it over the bar in a manner that would have had Peter Schmeichel purring in admiration.

There was a terrible familiarity about the demise of the England captain, though, and it stems from the capacity of Ambrose — a facility given to all great fast bowlers — to be able to operate on four-fifths throttle and then, when the moment suits, to bang in the afterburner.

In Atherton's case it always coincides with a ball that is slanted in, catching him before he has a chance to move

his feet. Yesterday's delivery caught him on the crease, the fourth time Ambrose has seen him off in this way this winter, and if the captain's body-language suggested that he felt a sense of injustice at Cyril Mitchell's leg-before decision, a dressing-room replay might have persuaded him that the ball, which struck him just above the knee roll of his pad, would have clipped the top of the stumps.

Atherton has always said that he would recognise when the time was right to relinquish the captaincy and he, not to mention the selectors, might decide that enough is enough. Already he has made the sort of noises about want-

ing to carry on as an international batsman that suggest he is weary of the job now. But there has to be a nagging doubt as to whether even now he must be allowed to go.

This side has played good cricket throughout the series and this has been the only genuinely one-sided match. It has been Atherton's misfortune, however, not to be blessed with a high-class bowling attack — and that would pertain no matter who was running the side.

The demolition of the England bowling was completed in the morning when Hooper completed the ninth century of a mercurial Test career. By the time Brian Lara had pulled the plug on the innings

he had reached 108, with 17 boundaries. Given its apparently destructive nature, it was a surprise to find Hooper's innings had occupied 150 deliveries, 97 more than Viv Richards' illustrious effort here a dozen years ago.

The great man was watching yesterday in the ground with a pavilion that bears his name. It was not so easy on the first day when he was turned away from the gate for not having a pass. He was allowed in only when he presented credentials to show that he was in fact Trevor Bailey. Fame, even in these parts, really is transitory.

Matthew Engel, page 15

Time to choose who plays Rocky II



Jim White

NEVER mind Istabraq in the Champion Hurdle, the biggest certainty of the year was that by the time he boarded the plane for Switzerland, Glenn Hoddie's England squad would be shorn of its contingent of Manchester United players.

Not someone renowned for his generosity to the Sassanach cause at the best of times, Alex Ferguson's predicament at home guaranteed that David Beckham, Nicky Butt and the others would be spending this week recuperating on the treatment tables at the Cliff rather than wearing the three lions on their shirt.

Of the seven United players picked by Hoddie, only Teddy Sheringham was able to join the Switzerland-bound party. The player was presumably allowed to go by Ferguson on the assumption that, the way he has been leading United's attack recently, another game might ease him back into some sort of form.

Thus, with Arsene Wenger also taking the Ferguson line and preferring that most of Arsenal's England players preserve their energies for the assault on the Double, and with Paul Gascoigne, Ian Wright and David Seaman already out, it will hardly be his dream team Glenn Hoddie fields against the Swiss tomorrow.

There was a conspiracy theory circulating informed quarters after the England manager announced his team for the Chile game last month, that he had deliberately selected a weakened side.

Alarmed, so the conjecture went, about over-hyped expectations of England's chances in the World Cup, he wanted to deflate the pressure a notch or two. Home defeat by an unfancied side who had recently struggled against New Zealand would serve such a function admirably.

If Hoddie really were that devious, he would have been thrilled about this week's turn of events. In truth, it is much more likely that he will be wondering why he is bothered. After all, the validity of any England game has to be questioned when the first name on the team sheet is Martin Keown.

Hoddie's putting a diplomatic spin on things yesterday.

day. He sympathised with club managers, he said, and understood that at this time of year, when domestic competition is reaching its climax, injuries can occur. Though he was tactful enough not to discuss the advances in sports medicine that enable players apparently barely capable of walking in international week suddenly to be able to tear round like spring lambs once club combat is resumed.

It was ever thus for England managers; their best interests have perpetually been hampered by more parochial priorities. Whatever his alleged machiavellian instincts, Hoddie — following the unanswerable logic that the more frequently they play together, the better they will get — would prefer to field his strongest team. Precedent suggests, however, that the first time he will be able to do that will be on June 14.

Though Hoddie will elicit some sympathy, the real victims in the perpetual skirmishing between club and country are those players on the fringe of selection but who have been withdrawn.

It is always around now that someone in the marzipan layer makes a break for the main party, running into form at precisely the right time. Martin Peters did it in 1966. David Platt did it in 1990.

But what history does not record are those players who found themselves overtaken on the last bend. They were in contention only to slip away at the last minute, individuals who never got the chance to show what they were worth because club commitments kept them out of the warm-up games in which their rivals shone.

It happened to Liverpool's Peter Thompson in 1966 and Arsenal's David Rocastle in 1990. Albeit neither of them certainly for the final squad, they were always in with a shout until edged out by the unfortunate happenstance of being withdrawn by their clubs at precisely the moment Peters and Platt made their dashes from obscurity.

So although the chances of some of Hoddie's emergency replacements this week — Dominic Matteo, for instance — making the final party are only marginally greater than the likelihood of Douglas Hall topping the popular vote as Tynesider of the Year, there will be others who might just seize the moment tomorrow.

Meanwhile, back in the physiotherapy rooms at Highbury and Old Trafford, the likes of Ray Parlour and Andy Cole will be praying that the unfortunate timing of their minor knocks does not prove terminal to their summer ambitions.

Redknapp ready to take his cue

David Lacey in Berne finds Glenn Hoddie has creative gaps to fill in England's friendly against Switzerland tomorrow

GLENN HODDIE briefed reporters at the South Bucks Rugby Ground on Monday morning and then left for Switzerland with an England squad looking a little low on trumps. If injuries have not wrecked his latest World Cup preparations, they have surely put a number of imponderables on hold.

Hoddie's response to losing nine players for tomorrow's friendly against the Swiss in the Wankdorf Stadium here has been measured rather than melodramatic. Jamie Redknapp and Dominic Matteo are due to play in the Under-21 match in Aarau tonight and then join the senior party.

This will bring the number of Liverpool players in the squad to five, a sharp contrast to the situation last summer when the withdrawals of Steve McManaman and Rob-

bie Fowler that so annoyed Hoddie left the team dominated by Manchester United. Now, of the seven United players called up for this game, only Teddy Sheringham has survived, and his form and fitness are in doubt.

Cue Redknapp, surely? Having lost David Beckham and Paul Scholes and decided that Paul Gascoigne was too short of match practice to be considered, Hoddie has even fewer creative players than were available for last month's game against Chile when England were outplayed to a 2-0 defeat.

Redknapp is no Gascoigne but he has good vision, a thunderous shot and can split a defence with a well-timed pass. He is due to play sweeper for the Under-21s as Hoddie looks beyond the World Cup to the qualifiers for the 2000 European Championship. But

France this summer is England's immediate concern.

Hoddie is in urgent need of fresh options in midfield to complement the blood-and-guts approach of Paul Ince and David Batty's creative limitations. It would appear Paul Merson or McManaman will be given a free role behind the front runners tomorrow.

But Redknapp's international career has been so beset by injury problems that it would be a pity if he missed an obvious opportunity to restate his case. Hoddie could accommodate his skills and still play Merson or McManaman.

For the moment, however, Hoddie will be more interested in discovering if Matteo can become an emergency left-back should Andy Hinchcliffe be forced out with a sore Achilles tendon. The loss of Hinchcliffe, following the withdrawal of Gary and

Philip Neville, has left England with no other specialist full-back in the squad.

True, Sol Campbell and Martin Keown have performed capably in this role for Tottenham and Arsenal respectively but in the present England set-up full-backs have to be wing-backs and, apart from Graeme Le Saux,



Redknapp... good vision

another casualty this week, none of Hoddie's first choices is fully attuned to the role.

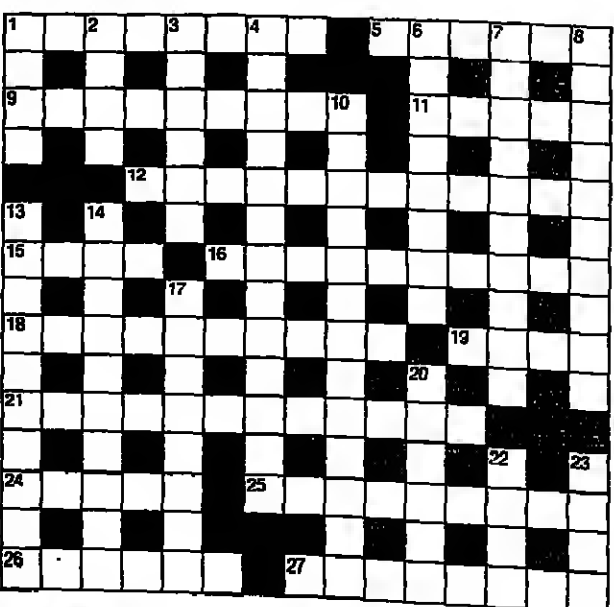
In any case, with Tony Adams dropping out on Sunday to have 10 days' remedial treatment on back and ankle injuries, Campbell and Keown will be needed in central defence, unless Hoddie feels this is the moment for Dion Dublin to prove his versatility at international level.

The principal point of tomorrow's game was always going to involve Alan Shearer's first start for England in nine months. Having missed more than half the season following a cruciate ligament injury last August, Shearer is set to lead out England for the first time since last summer's Tournoi de France.

But who will be his partner? Normally it would be Sheringham, although present circumstances favour Michael Owen, a success against Chile, being given the chance to play alongside the striker most likely to bring England success in the World Cup.

Guardian Crossword No 21,230

Set by Janus

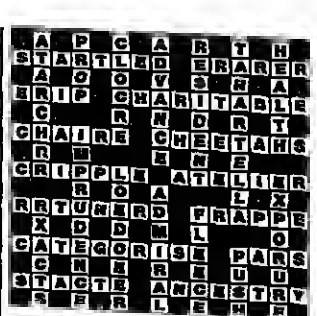


Across

- 1 Train island driver (8)
- 5 Some coupon chosen to obtain a waterproof cape (5)
- 9 Matches of celestial manufacture? (9)
- 11 Where for example youth leader may take exercise (5)
- 12 A plain diet at disposal of singer (7,5)
- 15 Turn round in a small island (4)
- 16 Ammunition left behind by wagon train, perhaps (10)
- 18 Magnificent memorials to a slum mouse? (10)
- 19 It is forbidden to some Atlanta bus drivers (4)
- 21 Bad conduct having bearing on motorways (12)
- 24 Run away with English pole-vaulter (5)

Down

- 2 Leader with a chase to match (9)
- 26 Jael's victim is a long time getting to the point (6)
- 27 "Twinkletons" the schoolboy's secret (8)
- 1 Where company doctor might make a splash (4)
- 2 Bill concerning land measure (4)
- 3 Capital arrangement for celebration after show (6)
- 4 Novel landing financial backer on sidewalk (5,8)
- 6 Roman author includes rape scene and is extravagantly remunerated (8)
- 7 Code message from underground call upsetting Margo (10)
- 8 Animal tales reported on press course (6,4)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,230

- 10 Simulating holiness, Simon can't break promises (13)
- 13 Tears apart underworld representatives (10)
- 14 In dogs, is no different from sudden attacks (10)
- 17 Ancestor in favour of a beer perhaps (8)
- 20 Not at home with group at start (6)
- 22 Retreat over foreign currency (4)
- 23 Almost a hundred attend church in style (4)

Solution tomorrow

23 Suck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 330 220. Call cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ADS



Women, who had thought that football was a puerile activity which kept men out of the house instead of doing their share of Saturday afternoon childcare, began to wonder if they had misjudged it — that it really was the beautiful game, that it had a philosophical beauty all its own.

Linda Grant on why the Newcastle revelations confirm women's fears about football

G2 page 7